The Modern Hagar

Chas. M. Clay.

MRS. JAS. F. TAYLOR.
No. 72
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY.

THE UNIVERSITY OF
NORTH CAROLINA
LIBRARY

THE WILMER COLLECTION
OF CIVIL WAR NOVELS
PRESENTED BY
RICHARD H. WILMER, JR.

"OUT OF PRINT BOOKS"
O'MALLEY'S BOOK STORE
377 FOURTH AVENUE

THE MODERN HAGAR.

A Novel.

BY

CHARLES M. CLAY,

AUTHOR OF "BABY RUE."

"Contempt is murder committed by the intellect, as hatred is murder committed by the heart. Charity, having life in itself, is the opposite and destroyer of contempt as well as hatred."—GEORGE MACDONALD.

Revised Edition.

TWO VOLUMES IN ONE.

NEW YORK:
PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR,
FROM THE OFFICE OF
FORDS, HOWARD, & HULBERT,
1883.

Copyright, 1881,
BY ROBERTS BROTHERS.

REVISED EDITION,
COPYRIGHT, 1883, BY CHARLES M. CLAY.

Dedicated

TO

DR. T. G. RICHARDSON,

NEW ORLEANS, LA.,

AND

TO THE MEMORY OF

THE LATE DR. DEMARQUAY,

PARIS, FRANCE.

535304

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2009 with funding from
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

http://www.archive.org/details/modernhagarnovel00clay

BOOK FIRST.

FILIA NULLIUS.

"The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge."

PART FIRST. 1850.

CHANGES AT BOUIE'S HILL.

CHAPTER I.

"The unseen Power, whose eye
For ever doth accompany mankind,
Hath looked on no religion scornfully
That man did ever find."

THREE years after the "Battle of the Witchita Peak," of which this truthful historian has told you elsewhere, he again finds some of the actors in the drama he is about to write in the Indian Territory. It was Christmas eve. The day had been one of those warm days that sometimes linger into December in the Southern States. Although the wind was changing from point to point in gusty swells, it had not chilled the evening. November had been unusually cold and stormy, and the blasts of two "northers" had stripped the foliage from bush and tree, except where the scrub-pines and red cedars held their dark-green colors against the hills.

But on this December evening there was the warmth of summer in the soft twilight, though the trees had lost the rippling melody that sings

through the quivering leaves of summer. The only sounds that disturbed the profound silence of the woods were occasional puffs of the changeful wind; then a quick rustling would sweep the forest floor, leaving a deeper stillness in the long intervals between the gasping breaths.

Over the wooded knolls and down the ravine—through which the footpath led from Fort Gibson to the quarters of Major Leszinksky at Bouie's Hill—into the stillness of the forest and the twilight, came a soldier, an Indian, and a nondescript giant on crutches, whose face was seamed with deep scars.

The three men halted at a little rustic lodge at the foot of Bouie's Hill, just within the orchard-gate, through which the road wound upward to the comfortable house of hewn logs that, with its broad piazza and flanking additions, crowned the wide, flat summit. The Indian stopped to close the gate—while the soldier assisted his companion up the steps which led to the porch of the cabin—then he entered the house and brought out a buffalo-rug, and was soon lying at ease between the rough settle where the cripple was installed and the steps where the soldier was seated. The latter puffed vigorously at his pipe for

a few seconds to keep it alight, and then resumed what was evidently an interrupted and discursive homily:

"Somehow this is the solemnest Christmas eve ever I met up with. Seems more like they was fixin' up thar"—pointing to the house on the hill—"fur a funeral than fur a weddin'. It's jest four years to-night sence I come h'yar with the news of the massaker at Castalar's, when the Pawnees and the Ottoes was on the war-path; an' they didn't spar' a human, in nary place they struck over on the Kiameshi, except the little Cap'n."

He stopped abruptly and glanced at the Indian; then, after a moment's hesitation, began in a lower tone, as though that were sufficient concession and apology for words which might not be altogether agreeable to one of his hearers.

"There's been a power o' changes since that time the Big Chief"—with an amicable nod to the Indian—"found the child and saved her from the tomahawks of his people. That trip to the Witchita hills, when we was a-follering his trail, a-ready to kill him like a wolf or a rattler, not a-knowin' he was more the little Cap'n's cap*tyve* than she was his'n, got me the *manner-*

poker and Cap'n Carson a wife. He was on'y a leftenant that time when he was a sarchin' fur Mrs. Leszinksky's baby and found Coacooche's darter. I'm free to say he mought a-married a white lady back in the States and a-done wuss. But howsomdever his gain has been, thar an't nary doubt 'bout *mine*. It was the stoppin' o' liquor fur me. That mornin' after we had to get up and get out o' the Semenolie valley my narves was a-shakin' and I was a-wantin' liquor wuss than a starvin' man could vittals. When we stopped at the Washiter ford to breathe the horses and let Mrs. Leszinksky rest a little, 'cause she was weak and poo'ly then, I jest got bold out o' desperation, and I went up to whar the doctor was a-standin' by that angel of a woman, and I said I must have a drink or I couldn't go another step. The doctor took out a flask and was gettin' a cup to pour it in when Mrs. Leszinksky called me. So be an' I should live till etarnity ended I never could forget how she looked or what she said. She laid one o' them little white hands o' hern on my arm, and handed me with the other a tin cup full o' coffee they had brought from the valley fur *her*. Her voice was mos' gone, what with the tire o' that long

night's ride and the pain that had commenced then to kill her the slow way it took her at last. But broke up, and between catches fur breath as she had to speak, thar wahn't never on this 'arth nor in heaven no sweeter music than that sweet voice o' hern when she said: 'Take this coffee, Bob, and fight the tempter. You can do it, because you are brave and true; you will, because we who love you best ask it. I may not live to get home. If I do I shall not have long to stay with you all, and I want you to make me a promise.' Jes' then I broke the grip o' liquor. I knowed I would, the first word she said—I knowed what she meant when them bright blue eyes o' hern, that shined like the cl'arest, brightest sky, looked at me as she give me the coffee. From that day to this I thank God I didn't make her wait or let her say what the promise was she wanted me to make. I took the cup from her, and before I tasted a drop thar was in it I jest went down on my knees by whar she was, and swore to God and her that while thar was a Leszinksky on 'arth that keered fur me to quit liquor I'd quit. You see the on'y kind o' resolution ever I kept was one that had some end to it spec-i-*fied*. It's the on'y kind I could keep.

You see when I used to swar off for ever, that was a sort o' blind time; and by not rightways a-knowin' just when 'twould end I allays busted it. All that day thar was a powerful strain on me—and me needed to go on to the regiment; but Leftenant Carson had to go and bring a ambulance and a escort. You know we was afeard o' trouble with the Semenolies, whose village had been raided by some murderin' rascals on our side; and we was *more* afeard that the volunteers they belonged to wouldn't disband without fightin' the Pawnees we had just made peace with, and who had brung us safe from the Semenolie valley.

"It was a mighty ticklish bizness all round; and wust of all fur me was the devil's tattoo that was a-beatin' in every narve and a-settin' me wild fur a drink.

"Then the Big Chief did me another thankee-job. In spite o' all the rumpus thar, with the devil broke loose in the woods betwixt the Creek nigger-catchers and the volunteers on our side, and the Semenolies on t'other, he sent one o' his warriors to Coacooche's village on the Canadian, and got me a tickler full o' that bitter black drink like the

Comanchee squaw give me over thar when I had that fit in the mountains. It busted the manner-poker, which was a-chasin' me, then and thar. Why, jest as soon as I drinked it I dropped in the bushes and slept till next mornin'. When the leftenant got back with the ambulance and a escort from our regiment, Mrs. Leszinksky made me get in it with her and the little Cap'n; and somehow I dropped off asleep agin, and never waked till we got to the camp at Little River. Then the next day I hearn you was a prisoner with the Comanchees."

Here the talker paused to relight his pipe, and nodded at the cripple, who moved uneasily, and then, as if compelled to fill the listening silence of the evening, said:

"It wahn't long afore you come fur me. I knowed I wouldn't be a prisoner long if you all could holp me—though I hadn't counted on the Big Chief thar, and I didn't know how the reg'*ment* had made out thar in that scrimmage at the ford. Arter I flanked the Comanchees in the timber along the divide, betwixt Wild Horse and Rush Creeks, I knowed whar the reg'ment mought get through

safe, so be and the reinforce*ments* stopped on this high bluff o' the Washiter, and shelled the woods across thar to the right, and cl'ared the underbrush. That was what I told Colonel Kearny when I got to whar he was camped, and that was what he sent me back to tell our *loo*tenant. But the Comanchees got me in the little trail through the holler, whar I had gone through a-goin. It sarved me right fur not a-havin' mo' sense. To trust to the Comanchees not a-strikin' my tracks—as if Injuns wahn't all eyes and ears on the war-path! The most mort-i-*fy*-in' thing was, they jest counted on my a-bein' a bawn fool, and I didn't noways disapp'*int* 'em. They cotched me like Abraham's ram, a-stuck in the mesquite bushes and the prickly p'ars, ready fur the sacri*fice*. Twice that day I thought my time had come. They tied my arms down behint me with a lari*at*, and they had another round my throat that they led me by to thar am*bush* in the woods near by the ford, a-prickin' me with thar knives when I didn't cl'ar the ground quick enough to suit thar move*ments*. They had tuck my blanket; but my huntin'-shirt and my brand-new buckskin

breeches was all cut and bloody with thar wasteful ways—to say nothin' o' the distressful feelin' o' my hide. Well, when they got over thar by the Washiter, and I was stiff and sore and wore out with the long, quick march, they loosed the lari*at*, that had cut the skin o' my swelled-up throat, and ordered me to hail our fellows, who I could see up thar on the bluff, just whar I had been sent to tell 'em to come. At first I couldn't speak; then they gin me water. Arterward they saw I wahn't a-goin' to speak, so they drew the lari*at* round my wrists sich a way that I've got a pa'r o' bracelets o' thar make yet." And the cripple looked at a cicatrized ring around his wrists as he continued: "I thought once o' hollerin' to our *loo*tenant, as was then, that the Injuns had me, but to shell away into thar am*bush;* then I got afeard they might come to holp me, and *not* shell the woods, which they was a-fixin' to do. So I just kep' still and they shelled the Injuns out, and me along with 'em, led by the lari*at*, that gin me a necklace to match my bracelets." He loosened his collar, with a shake of his head to prove its present freedom, and

concluded with: "Then I had to keep still, which you know, Starns, is most nateral to me." And he smiled at the soldier. The sarcasm, if intended, was of no avail, for "Starns" was ready and waiting to go on with his reminiscences.

"Well, you wahn't so still that mornin' the Big Chief and me got to the Comanchee village in the very nick o' time to get you out'-en thar roastin'-forks! We hearn you a-singin' afore we rounded the p'int at the foot o' the hill. I told the Big Chief somethin' oncomman must be up, becase I'd never hearn you a-goin' on that-a-way. If you had been a-whistlin' 'twould a-been more nateral; but somehow that hymn you was a-rollin' out sounded like a camp-meetin' in old Missoury. I was clean took out o' my reckonin' when we tarned the p'int and I seed you tied up to that hackberry-tree, with a slow fire a-curlin' into little red tongues round your legs. 'Twas mighty well them red devils had fixed you to roast slow, and left your leggins and moccasins on while they amused tharselves a-shootin' burnin' arrers all round, a-slicin' your face into the tree. And if they hadn't

a-spared your eyes, a-hopin' to see you flinch from thar arrers, you would a-had no eyes worth speakin' on, time we got you loose. As 'twas, what gives my liver a rise now every time I think on it is, they shrivelled the sinews o' the bravest trailer that ever walked in thar cursed country. But if it hadn't a-been fur the fix we found you in 'twould a-been worth while a-goin' fur you, to see what splendid fightin' a *real* warrior kin do when his blood's at the bilin'-p'int."

And the soldier looked admiringly at the Indian, whose eyes seemed to reflect the lurid light of battle as this vision of the past was uncovered in the present.

After a short pause to knock the ashes from his pipe, and adjust a quid of tobacco to a spot in his cheek where it would not interfere with speech, the soldier continued:

"I disremember what 'twas I said—most like thar was some tall swarin' in it, for the leftenant, as was then, hadn't broke me in to quit, which I've done to please him, leastwise excep' the 'casion is powerful provokin'. But that's nuther here nor thar; what I was a-goin' to say was this: The Big Chief knowed it was you we

had come fur. Now, he had promised Major Leszinksky—leftenant he was then—that he'd ransom you or take you from them crawlin' snakes. *An' he did it.* The rest on us didn't count fur much, though we done our best, too—but what a devil of a fightin' race we had arter we got you!"

The crippled giant looked up at the rosy sky as he said:

"It was the Lord did it. I don't mean no way to belittle none o' you nor what you done fur me; but the odds agin you was past the power o' man to overcome, if the Lord hadn't a-made bar' his arm."

There was a moment of stillness, then a few bars of a sacred melody rose through the soft air of that December twilight.

"Yes," said the soldier softly, as the voice of the cripple faltered and the sound was hushed, "that's it; that's the hymn the Big Chief thought was the death-song of a warrior:

"'When through fiery trials.'"

The cripple turned to his auditors a scarred and mutilated face, but the eyes were full of love and faith as he spoke:

"It's the life-song, and, if so be, the death-song, o' any o' God's creeters as clings to him and trusts him to help 'em."

The soldier cleared his throat: "I don't go much on preachers, or long norations 'bout religion. And I can't come to believe thar's any wuss hell 'an that a man totes inside of him when he's been brung up short and made to take 'count of his own meannesses; or when he's got the *manner-poker*, and sees what he knows *an't*, and feels the grip o' the devil that swims in every drap o' liquor. But I do think, Pike, you and our old leftenant, Major Leszinksky, has got the humanest feelin' for other folks, and the best friendship for God A'mighty, of any men ever I met up with. But you an't no better in your way than the Big Chief is in his'n; and you don't stick no closer to the textes you find in your Bible than he does to what the Great Spirit tells *him*. Now, I don't believe heaven's a narrer settle*ment* fenced in by burnin' brimstone. But I do believe Mrs. Leszinksky's thar; and when I know how *she* pitied me—an' me a wuthless drunkard—I know *God* an't a-goin' to turn agin me just when I'm at the last pinch a-tryin' to find a cl'ar path with the blindfold of

death on me. I an't a-sayin' nothin' agin your religion; you're a Baptist, and water's cleanin', but it don't allus wash the meanness out'en a man. The thing was, *you* hadn't waited fur that dip to do right by white, and black, and red. It an't what a man calls hisself but what he does that shows the grain in him. And thar's a heap o' *doin'* that God an't a-goin' to count agin a man.

"Sometimes it's thar lights as is deceivin' 'em, like the Big Chief when he's a-takin' scalps or layin' for a Comanchee. Sometimes it's thar weakness leads 'em into quagmires—I know—But here comes Cap'n Rue."

He sprang down the steps and then stiffened into a rigid military salute as a wee maiden came flying down the path under the leafless trees, shouting:

"Bob! Bob! Tell Pike—tell my chief—papa's coming. He is over there on the hill. I saw him through the spy-glass. O Pike! O my chief! papa's coming, papa's coming!"

CHAPTER II.

"A man might then behold
At Christmas, in each hall,
Good fires to curb the cold,
And meat for great and small."

EARLY in the afternoon of that same Christmas eve a lady, a servant, and the wee maiden who in our last chapter interrupted the soldier's discourse were busy decorators of the dining-room and wide-spread, hospitable table at "Bouie's Hill." There were rapturous but disconnected ejaculations of praise and delight from child and servant, as Miss Carson, with the steadiness of a firm, unhesitating character, tried effects and produced results that, according to her own judgment and the present lights of her admiring assistants, could not have been bettered. Those assistants were two. The first was a tall, stately mulatto woman, whose kindly face and large brown eyes were brought into full and effective relief by the bordering of silver hair that rippled in thick, soft waves be-

neath the gay Madras handkerchief wound above and around the erect and well-poised head. The smaller personage was the witching little despot known to us, some four years earlier than the date of this history, as "Baby Rue," now a slender, pale little maiden, whose tawny pallor was lit by scarlet lips and the flashing, changeful lustre of gray eyes that might have caught their color from the gleam of a Damascus blade. There was a wild, untrained grace in the child's every movement—a grace that comes of the perfect sympathy of body and soul, where action is the twin of thought. Every word that came through the mobile lips was foreshadowed in the expressive face and in the changing light of the beautiful eyes; and to every word a gesture was fitted.

There was little to hear in the dining-room—nothing to inform the reader either of present or past. Rue varied her exclamations with sudden dashes into the sitting-room to tell the gentlemen there of some new wonder; with swift rushes to the front piazza, where the spy-glass was poised to command an extended view of the road on the bluff some two miles distant from Bouie's Hill; with quick runs to the kitchen,

where, under the supervision of Sara's frequent visits, Mead's work as *chef* steadily progressed.

That I may conscientiously pick up and wind into the woof of this truthful, painstaking narrative a few threads that tie us to the past of the characters I am about to introduce, I shall jot down some broken bits of talk that Rue might have heard, had that brilliant butterfly rested alight a moment from her swift flights on that particular 24th of December, in the kitchen at Bouie's Hill, where a patriarchal negro iterates his complaints and comments :

"An't yo' dun fix de dinin'-room yet, Sara?"

"Yes, Daddy, everything's ready now ; on'y Miss Mary Carson she's so partic'lar 'bout fixin' them posies roun' de plates."

"Well, yo' better leave her 'lone, an' stay heah an' see how Mead's a-doin' de roasts. I can't sot *my* mind to watchin' him, nohow. I'se in a daze wid all dese go-downs in de fam'ly. I didn't 'spec to stay heah long 'nough to see sich gwine'ns on. May-be it's de Lord's work, but it 'pears to me mighty like de debble had a finger in de pie. I an't had no peaceable 'ligious 'sperience sinct dat time dey all got back heah arter little Miss Rue was stoleded an' carried to

de Injun country. Dat was de fust of de settlin' of de sabages on dis place. I knowed dar wahn't no good gwine to come on it when Miss Marg'ret had dat cabin built yonder t'other side de big house fur dat Injun chief, case he spared Miss Rue out'en dat slaughter and gin her back. It was jes' a-flyin' in de face of Provi*dence*. An' yo' see, Sara, what a back-sat we'se all got. De fust thing dat happened arter Marse Carson marry dat young Injun woman showed it. Heah was Marse Stan an' Miss Marg'ret an' de baby sent t' Mexiker, an' yo' an' Oscar gone wid 'em ; an' *we* all lef' heah wid nobody but Miss Mary Carson an' de Injuns. Not as I kin say de Big Chief stayed ; but dar was dat Wildcat a-visitin' his darter heah, an' she a-visitin' him, an' red an' black Injuns a-comin' an' a-gwine night an' day. Dis an't been no Christian settle*ment* sinct dat time. 'Twant no wonder de Lord tuk Miss Marg'ret home. He knowed hebbin was better fur her dan dis place. But now Marse Stan has jes' gone an' done it fur sho'. Lord ! Lord ! I'se glad de Mason name's done lef' in ole Firginny. It's de Desinksky part o' Marse Stan dat's done made dis heah las' match. Now, de Cart'rets was somebody, an' Miss Mar-

g'ret was fit to walk in my Miss Mary's shoes; but dese *Caslers*—umph!—ah! dey an't no mo' dan half-breeds: outlandish folks mixed in wid a Injun streak. I *was* a-waitin' my time to go to de New Jerus'lem, but now I's shame to go dar. How *could* a 'spectable fam'ly sarvant, dat was *bawn* at Mount Hope an' brung up wid a gran' gen'leman like my marster was, face all de ole Masons up dar an' tell 'em what Marse Stan's been a-doin'? Why, 'twould raise a 'sturbance in de golden streets. All de bestest o' dem ole Firginny fam'lies 'ill be afeard to hurt de feelins o' de Masons, if dey ax me de news from down heah.

"I didn't used to want to outlive Marse Stan; but if de Lord's willin' I'd a heap ruther he'd go fust *now* an' 'splain dis bizness, 'f he can.

"Mead, you better turn dat turkey in de 'flectar. Not dat it matters much 'f 'tis scorched; dis an't no 'casion to be proud o' de Mason cookin'.

"Lord! Lord! when I *con*sider de Masons in de New Jerusalem, an' 'flects on dem dat's buried in ole Firginny, an' sees de latest skion o' de male side a-marryin' a quarter-bred French Injun, I feel like a-prayin' wid de profic, 'Let

dy sarvant 'part in peace'; an' I'd be glad, 'cept fur de rumpus I'd have to raise wid de judge's father, to say nuthin' ob de way ole Gen'ral Desinksky's a-gwine to swar 'bout dis crossin' a thoroughbred wid a scrub w'en he heahs 'bout it up thar."

Here Rue rushed in with a fresh gush of enthusiasm over Miss Carson's last *chef-d'œuvre* of decorative art, and dragged the stately Sara from the stool where she sat and pondered the questions propounded by the aged mourner in his jeremiad over the fallen glory of his master's house.

CHAPTER III.

There is something in the character and habits of the North American savage, taken in connection with the scenery over which he is accustomed to range, that is, to my mind, wonderfully striking and sublime. He is formed for the wilderness, as the Arab is for the desert. His nature is stern, simple, and enduring, fitted to grapple with difficulties and to support privations. There seems but little soil in his heart for the support of the kindly virtues; and yet, if we would but take the trouble to penetrate through that proud stoicism and habitual taciturnity which lock up his character from casual observation, we should find him linked to his fellow-man of civilized life by more of those sympathies and affections than are usually ascribed to him. It has been the lot of the unfortunate aborigines of America to be doubly wronged by the white man. They have been dispossessed of their hereditary possessions by mercenary and frequently wanton warfare, and their characters have been traduced by bigoted and interested writers. The colonist often treated them like beasts of the forest, and the author has endeavored to justify him in his outrages. The former found it easier to exterminate than to civilize; the latter to vilify than to discriminate. In peace the Indian has been the dupe of artful traffic; in war he has been regarded as a ferocious animal, whose life or death was a question of mere precaution and convenience.—*Traits of Indian Character*, WASHINGTON IRVING.

THE Pawnee chief was on his feet at the first sound of Rue's voice; and as she came flying down the hill he sprang lightly from the porch of the little cabin and caught her in his arms, she still calling as they passed on to the gate, "Papa's coming! My chief! my chief! papa's coming."

The impatient little princess had still a good half-hour to wait. I leave her surrounded by faithful subjects, and present to the reader another group I have left all this time alone in the sitting-room on the hill.

Captain Carson had arrived during the morning of the 24th from New Mexico by way of the Witchita Mountains. At Cañada and El Emboda, in the fight of the insurgents with Burgwin's dragoons and the volunteers from Missouri under Colonel Sterling Price, he had won his grade as first lieutenant. For the action at Pueblo de Taos, where Burgwin was killed, he was brevetted captain, and was soon afterward given a company in consideration of his gallant service at San Rosales.

At the time of his marriage to the daughter of the Seminole chief, Mrs. Leszinksky had invited Carson's sister Mary to come to Bouie's Hill and remain there with the newly-made wife during the absence of Carson and of the Leszinkskys.

In acknowledgment of Leszinksky's service to the government in the pacification of the tribes and the alliance formed with the Pawnees of Lo-loch-to-hoo-la's band, that officer had his

brevet as captain and was ordered to join General Taylor's "Army of Observation," then near San Antonio.

Knowing what the anxiety of Mrs. Leszinksky would be if separated from her husband, to whom she was passionately devoted, Dr. Randall, who was then—as at the time this story begins—stationed at Fort Gibson, advised that she should go with her husband. The one hope left for her health was change—change of climate and scene, and, as far as possible, entire forgetfulness of the harrowing anguish through which she had passed at the time of her little daughter's capture in the affair at Castalar's.

As we have heard from Uncle Abram, during the absence of the Leszinkskys the Seminole chief was a frequent visitor at Bouie's Hill, no less from affection for his daughter than to protect the interests of his allies, the Black Indians. Trusting to the justice of the President (who, in the third article of the last treaty with the Seminoles, was given final jurisdiction "in all contested cases concerning the right of property growing out of sales or transactions previous to the ratification of the treaty"), Coacooche* had

* Coacoochc—Wildcat, the Seminole chief.

demanded of General Arbuckle protection for his allies, who were now being claimed by the Creeks as the descendants of their escaped slaves.

Believing, as did every gentleman in the army, that by the treaties made with the Seminoles the honor of the government was pledged for the freedom and security of these negroes, General Arbuckle directed this persecuted people to encamp and remain upon the government reservation near Fort Gibson, assuring them that neither the Creeks nor the human sleuth-hounds who had followed them from Georgia should molest or enslave them. Once again in the history of Indian treaties *pledged faith was faithless.* The government ordered the Black Indians to return to their villages, promised them security—and then left them to the tender mercy of greed and hate. The Executive temporized and delayed judgment while giving semi-official countenance to the order for their return to the Creek country, and at last permitted, if it did not authorize, their capture by the slave-traders.

In all of the trials of this long-suffering tribe Coacooche had been their unfaltering friend and protector. He was frequently at Fort Gibson,

and more frequently in the Cherokee country, consulting with Chief Ross, who had never wavered in his advocacy of the rights of the Seminoles since that disastrous epoch when he had been the unwitting agent of the government in the deception practised upon them at the time of their removal from Florida.

As the sympathy of the master of Bouie's Hill was known to be warmly enlisted in behalf of this wronged people, the place naturally came to be the headquarters of the Seminoles during the time of the sojourn of their allies upon the reservation. Truly, in the language of Uncle Abram, "thar was red an' black Injuns all de time a-comin' and a-gwine."

When, some months after the birth of her son, Carson's wife, Alaha-Chayna, received his permission to follow him to Mexico, Coacooche came to take leave of his daughter; he had at Bouie's Hill a final interview with General Arbuckle.

The honest soldier frankly told the chief that he had been ordered to interpose no further obstruction to the arrest of the Black Indians by the traders who had bought them from the Creeks. The reply of the Seminole should be written in letters of gold in the history of the

North American Indians: "Coacooche will never desert the brave warriors who fought by his side in Florida for the homes of their tribe and the graves of their dead. The White Father at Washington has closed his ears to the truth and his eyes to the sight of the oppressed. He has ordered the Seminoles and their allies to the Creek country, that the slave-catchers may secure their victims. The traders in men, like hungry hounds, have tracked the Seminoles from Florida to Arkansas, and the White Father has told his soldiers to give the allies of the Seminoles to those dogs. Coacooche has turned his face to the setting sun, that he may find safety for his people and the brave black tribe that grew up beneath the shade of his father's lodge. He will build his nest high in the mountains near the eyries of the eagles. Like eagles the Seminoles will defend their nests. If the Creeks and the slave-catchers follow the trail of Coacooche their bones will whiten the crags."

All this story of the Seminoles came into the talk of the two gentlemen who were waiting in the little sitting-room at Bouie's Hill for the coming of their old comrade. Together they

unrolled the pages of the past four years. Carson's account of himself was so brief and modest that I have thought best to supplement his story with the knowledge I have gleaned elsewhere of his gallantry in the battle-field of New Mexico.

Colonel Beall's story, as he told it to Carson that soft December evening, was an outline history of the Mexican War, illustrated by battle-pictures which stirred the blood and set the pulses throbbing like martial music. But somehow into it all crept the same sad tale of the wronged Indian. For here and there into these battle-pieces flashed the stalwart figure of the great Pawnee who, through love for the child he had found in the war-path and adopted as his own, fought by Leszinksky's side like a brother.

The mention of Burgwin's gallant fight, where Carson was wounded, brought the talk again to Coacooche; and how, when Carson was nigh unto death, the Seminole chief found him and nursed him with the gentleness of a woman, bringing him, as soon as he could sit his horse, by slow marches to the valley high up the hills, where the tonic water of the boiling-spring and the pure air gave him health and strength. Then

Beall conquered the prejudice of a Florida veteran and acknowledged the wrong-doing of the white race and the gallantry of his old foe.

There was a long reflective pause, after which Carson took from a shelf of "King Stan's" bookcase a well-worn volume of Washington Irving that had been conned by camp-fires in the wilderness, and read this extract from *Philip of Pokanoket*, which might have been written of Coacooche. Beall nodded assent at every period:

"He was a patriot attached to his native soil; a prince true to his subjects and indignant of their wrongs; a soldier daring in battle, firm in adversity, patient of fatigue, of hunger, of every variety of bodily suffering, and ready to perish in the cause he had espoused. Proud of heart, and with an untamable love of natural liberty, he preferred to enjoy it among the beasts of the forest or in the dismal recesses of swamps and morasses rather than bow his haughty spirit to submission and live dependent and despised in the ease and luxury of the settlements. With heroic qualities and bold achievements that would have graced a civilized warrior and have rendered him the theme of the poet and the his-

torian, he lived a wanderer and a fugitive in his native land, and went down like a lonely bark foundering amid darkness and tempest, without a pitying eye to weep his fall or a friendly hand to record his struggle."

CHAPTER IV.

"The night hath a thousand eyes,
The day but one;
But the light of the whole world dies
At set of sun.

"The mind hath a thousand eyes,
The heart but one;
Yet the life of a whole life dies
When love is done."

AS Carson replaced the book the door opened and there entered our old acquaintance, Dr. Randall.

"How are you, Carson? I *am* glad to see you. Your color and size tell me I need not ask how is the wound. You do not look much like the fellow I saw in the Witchita last summer."

"You see," said Carson, as they warmly clasped hands, "the result of good nursing, the valley climate, and draughts from, and baths in, the Medicine Spring of the Witchita."

"Yes, it has wonderful tonic qualities. You may thank your wife, the climate, and the spring

that you lived to be Captain Carson. I congratulate you on your well-deserved promotion. Better late than never, but it should have come a year ago. It was gallantly won."

"It was dearly bought. Poor Burgwin's death was a greater loss to the regiment and the country than would have been a dozen moss-troopers like me."

"His death was a grief to us all. Nothing has so touched the soldierly feeling of the First Dragoons since Captain Moore was killed; but neither will the regiment forget how *you* avenged Burgwin's death or how stubbornly you fought to make his victory sure."

"Colonel Price and his volunteers did that. They fought like regulars. If Price would stay in the service I think he would prove that soldiers are sometimes 'born, not made.' But you know all this."

"Did you leave your wife in the valley?"

"Yes; since you were there last summer Coacooche has removed the remnant of the tribe of Black Indians to Mexico. Next spring he will go there with his wife and family, and such of the Seminoles as are now with him. His Mexican home is in the hills near Lareda. I fear he

will be a thorn in the side of our general on the Rio Grande."

"But your wife and her little children are not going to Mexico?"

"No; Alaha-Chayna will only stay in the valley this winter. When her father leaves for Mexico I will bring my wife and boys here."

There was greeting between Randall and Beall, questions of courtesy and friendship asked and answered, news given of old comrades, talk of old times and the changes since they had parted four years before. Carson told of having met Hartley in Santa Fé during the past summer. Randall asked:

"What was he doing there? Is it possible he served with the volunteers? I know he has not rejoined the regular army."

The answer came in an indignant negative: "Catch him with either! A cold-blooded scoundrel like Hartley return to the army as regular or volunteer! His patriotism would never induce him to risk his life—less than ever *now* that he has inherited one great fortune and is waiting the handling of another."

"I knew he had succeeded to the dollars of that miserly old peltry-monger, his uncle, but

did not know fortune intended to pelt him with further favors."

"Randall, that villainous attempt at a pun has but one excuse—a villain inspired it."

"Keep it up! Mine was made unwittingly, yours in cold blood. But about Hartley's expectation? Since his sister married Judge Cartaret, for Rue's sake I am curious about the Hartleys. Judge Cartaret was Mrs. Leszinksky's nearest relative, besides being her guardian and trustee, and, if Stan should die, would be Rue's."

"Well, you know all that and do not know what fortune I meant? Why, the great Cartaret estate, that doubled during Mrs. Leszinksky's minority and that will be quadrupled before Rue is of age."

"Carson, are you slightly demented?" said the doctor. "By what quibble of law do you suppose Hartley could ever have the slightest interest in the Cartaret estate?"

"Do you not know he has married Judge Cartaret's oldest daughter?"

"No," said the doctor, while Beall exclaimed:

"By Jove! I believe the meaner a man is the more surely he attracts money."

"Yes," Carson continued, "there is but one life between him and Rue's inheritance. If Tom Cartaret dies, according to Colonel Cartaret's will Judge Cartaret's next oldest child is Rue's successor."

"But, Carson," said the doctor, "you forget Rue herself. I do not think the imperious little princess will 'shuffle off the mortal coil' to oblige Hartley, so there are two lives between him and the 'Cedars'; but it is an aggravation to think he is even that near Mrs. Leszinksky's estate. I hope young Cartaret will marry and have a very patriarchal family."

This opened the flood-gate of Beall's anecdotal lore, and he cited so many cases in which capital aggregated capital, and rich men supplanted next of kin in even petty successions, that to calm Carson's prophetic rage and change the subject Randall asked:

"Will Mrs. Carson come to Bouie's Hill when she leaves the valley?"

"Yes; Stan wrote me the old arrangement must hold through all changes, though God knows I never should have anticipated such a change as this second marriage."

Rue came with a message from Miss Carson,

asking Colonel Beall's judgment in some grave matters of decoration. As he left the room with the child the dragoon, whose face was still clouded, asked the doctor abruptly: "Has Stan perfectly recovered his health?"

"No," said Randall; then he added, after a moment's pause, "He will never be as strong as when you saw him last. The wound from which he will never recover is Mrs. Leszinksky's death. It took all his courage as a man, all his patience and faith as a Christian, to bear that loss."

"And yet," said Carson in a half-angry tone, "he has married again. I can scarcely forgive Stan this treason to the purest woman, the most perfect love, ever won by man."

Both were silent until Randall, looking up, saw great tears falling over the bearded face of the soldier. Then he told the story—all the pitiful story of Margaret's illness and death: of his stay with her and Rue and Stephanie Castalar at San Antonio, while Leszinksky was with General Taylor at Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma; of his journey, with his patient and the children, to Matamoras, where Mrs. Leszinksky could be nearer her husband and with her old friends the Andersons. He told of the deceptive

improvement in her health that finally mocked their hopes ; of the parting when Leszinksky, after a short visit to Matamoras, had to hurry on to Camargo that he might rejoin General Taylor before the attack upon Ampudia at Monterey. He told how, in that last supreme moment of anguish, the wife reminded her husband of the promise he had made her in the Witchita valley—a promise to keep Rue with him, to give a home in his old age to Lo-loch-to-hoo-la. She recounted the Indian's faithful and unwearying service to her and to their child in Mexico, where his love to them had brought the chief afar from his land and his people. Then she talked of Stephanie; of the kindness of the Castalars in the happy early days of her life on the frontier ; of Stephen's brave effort when he gave his life to defend their child. She asked that Stephanie should stay with Rue and be made to feel she had of right a home with the Leszinkskys ; that Rue be taught never to fail in remembrance of the debt of love and gratitude owing to the dead Castalars.

Then Randall recounted more briefly a story Carson had already partly heard from Beall—the story of Leszinksky : how, twice wounded in

that heroic charge when the bishop's palace was stormed at Monterey, Lo-loch-to-hoo-la found Leszinksky, with his arm shattered by a grape-shot, lying unconscious amid the dead who had been mowed down in swaths by the Mexican artillery; and how the Pawnee chief brought him out of that fiery storm of battle to the ambulance where, with the corps of surgeons, Randall waited for the wounded. Here Randall's own words give the clearest picture of the past:

"We amputated Stan's left arm, and dressed the wound in the face that had been made by the splintered bayonet of a soldier who was killed by his side; the face-wound was slight, but the arm was so crushed and shattered it had to be cut at the shoulder. He had begged, just as soon as he recovered consciousness, that it might be done at once, saying: 'I must be sent back to Camargo, and then to Matamoras. I *must* reach there before my wife hears I am wounded. You know, Randall, she would insist on coming to me, so patch me up and let me take the news to her. She will see then I am not dangerously hurt. If you do not the excitement and the anxiety will be worse for her.' There was a tone in those last words I could not resist. That night I

started with him to Camargo—one hundred and eighty miles in an ambulance. *You* will know how he suffered. When we reached Camargo and got him on the steamer his fever was at its height. But during it all his only impatience was at any delay; I do not think he had a thought that was not of his wife."

There was a break in the voice of the speaker; then, after a short pause and a hasty glance at Carson, whose face was shaded by his hand, Randall continued:

"Mrs. Leszinksky was dead when we reached Matamoras. We carried Stan to her room only to look upon the coffined face of the woman who had blessed his life and made ours better—"

Again there was a hush; then, as a child's merry laughter rang from across the hall, there came a half-stifled groan from Carson, and the yellow, glinting rays of the burning lightwood were reflected in the drops that fell thick and fast upon his tawny beard.

Randall had walked to the window. Then, as if thinking the story must be finished, still standing with his back to the dragoon, he went on:

"There were a lot of wounded to be sent

home, and I got leave to exchange with the surgeon in charge. At New Orleans they were sent to the hospital or discharged, so I came here with Stan, and the children, and . . . Mrs. Leszinksky's remains. . . . You know, of course, she is buried here, as she wished?"

"Yes, I know; go on, tell it all."

"Stan's recovery was slow. All of the next year he was at Bouie's Hill. Your sister Mary had gone home—you remember your father was ill—so Stephanie Castalar was growing to womanhood dependent solely upon her protector and guardian. Mr. and Mrs. Page were gone, so were the families of all of our old comrades. The new people were quite different: I do not think there is another such set of gossips and mischief-makers in the army as that which chance had then gathered into the fort. You know Stan's character—how thoroughly unselfish he is; how modest in his estimate of himself; how tender and considerate of every member of his household; how chivalric and respectful to women. Stephanie could not help but love him. I saw it long before the girl could have defined the feeling that was filling her heart. But I saw it too late to warn her, even if such

warning was ever heeded. An American girl of seventeen would have outlived her dream had she been rudely awakened; would have defended herself with her inherent coquetry, would have flirted herself out of love, though possibly shrining in her heart a higher ideal—one that would make her more difficult for a lover to win in the future, because of the lesson learned at the outset. But Stephanie has the mixed French and Indian blood; she is impulsive and passionate, quiet, shy, self-restrained, but absolute in devotion.

"Had I thought sooner of her growing womanhood I think I should have foreseen what must result from propinquity and opportunity. But we wiseacres are always wise in the fulness of what *has* happened. Then when I did see I blundered like an ass. I made stupid efforts to detach Stan from Bouie's Hill, to introduce the set at the fort, to force him to be attentive to women who were his friend's guests. Thus I thought to relegate Stephanie back to childhood. The result was—I taught her the secret of her own heart. Unfortunately, it was soon an open secret to the garrison."

Randall walked the floor, looking from time

to time at Carson, whose expectant face forced the doctor to go on:

"You know something of garrison scandal: its persistent prying, its amplification of facts, its eagerness to scatter its grains broadcast—in short, the potentiality of its littleness. Well, there was a constant undercurrent of talk—a flood that was swelling from bank to bank. I felt as a Hollander might who had tried to assist a poor neighbor by helping him dig his garden, and, digging backwards, had unintentionally cut through the dike. But—to flounder out of my metaphor—I had done the mischief; and, seeing Stephanie's agitation as the heart waked the senses; seeing, too, that the cruelest of critics were on the alert, and hearing gossipping calculations of her chances of failure or success, I grew pitiful of the girl and tried to do what was right and just. I told the story as I knew it to Stan, advising him to send Stephanie to the Misses Minor's school at Mount Hope, in Virginia. You know Mount Hope belongs to Rue. Crippled as Stan is for money, it was, I thought, the best thing to be done. The Misses Minor are ladies, and Stephanie could not have been in kinder or better keeping; so I volun-

teered *that* advice. You need not look it. I know it was stupid, cursedly stupid; I should have known what Stan would do when this open secret of the garrison, with the comments of the gossips, was told him. The next morning after our conversation—which was only one-sided, for *I* talked—he asked me if I would accompany *Miss Castalar* to Memphis to Major Anderson's. Like a blanked idiot I expressed my satisfaction at this move, and added that in a year or two 'Stephanie would better understand her position in his family.' He interrupted me with: 'I shall go for *Miss Castalar* this fall; we are to be married in December.' Then he left me stunned with the surprise of an ending I had *not* contemplated. An hour later I walked over the hill there"—and Randall pointed to where a shaft of white marble gleamed amid the euonymus-trees—"where I found Stan lying senseless upon Mrs. Leszinksky's grave."

CHAPTER V.

"Where is the child that would willingly forget the most tender of parents, though to remember be but to lament?"

FOR some minutes after Randall's story was told there was a deep silence in the room. Then they heard from the south piazza a mingling of voices, a child's glad shout, and the tinkle of quick-running little feet.

The door opening into the hall was pushed ajar, and the shining brown face of a half-grown negro boy was thrust forward into the room, as he announced, with an air evidently studied for the occasion:

"Major Dezinksky am approachin' de premises wid his bride. We done seed de 'quipage over dar on top ov de ridge. Miss Rue done gone down to de gate to pursent her 'spects on de kashun; an' Miss Mary an' me thought you mought like to jine us and Kunnel Beall out on de piazzer, whar we'se a-waitin' to make our compli*ments* and *con*gratulations."

Randall laughed, and even Carson's grim face

relaxed into a half-smile as he muttered some adjectives to which "idiot" was finally attached. The two gentlemen followed the self-important and self-appointed usher to the piazza, where Beall and Miss Carson were waiting. The carriage of the travellers was now in full view, coming down the hill on the opposite side of the ravine through which the little creek wound around the base of Bouie's Hill.

As the carriage passed through the gate, which Bob Stearns held open, the driver reined in his horses, and the Indian chief lifted the eager child into the door that was opened by a gentleman, who folded her in a close embrace. Then loosening the little hands that were clasped about his head, he turned her face to the lady who sat by his side, saying:

"Kiss your new mamma, my daughter."

The child drew back with a cold, proud air:

"She is *not* my mamma; she is only *Stephanie.* My mamma is with God. You told me so, papa."

"But, my dear child, because your mother is with God He has sent you another mother; so you will kiss her and let her be your mamma."

The child looked intently into her father's eyes; with a sudden movement she turned and held her scarlet lips for the silent lady's kiss, then as suddenly returned to the shelter of her father's breast, hiding her face as she said:

"Stephanie is not my mamma; but if God wants her to be my mamma, and my own dear mamma wants her, and you want her, why I will call her Mamma Stephanie. But I won't say just 'mamma.' Papa! O papa! I cannot."

The child burst into a storm of sobs that she tried in vain to stifle. An agonized expression came to her father's face. Recollecting that the scene had witnesses, he folded his cloak about her as she clung to him; then, when he could release his solitary arm, he held out his hand to the Indian, whose eyes flashed a glad light as their hands touched. The soldier had advanced to the carriage-door, and there was a fresh hand-shaking. Of course Bob found voice:

"I wish you joy, major, and you too, Mrs. Leszinksky."

After a moment's hesitation, as if uncertain what the etiquette of the occasion required, Stearns ventured to extend his hand to the

lady, who spoke a low "Thank you" as she touched the extended hand with her gloved fingers, which retreated instantly when the Indian reached out his hand to follow the soldier's lead in courtesy. The rejected hand was withdrawn, and the Indian walked back to Pike's house, stopping by the side of the rough log steps, against which he leaned, while a mournful, far-away look gave an unusual and touching expression to the stern, battle-scarred face. With a quick glance, that had in it more of entreaty than reproach, at the lady by his side, Major Leszinksky clasped his arm about his little daughter and sprang from the carriage. He called to the driver:

"Go on, Oscar; I will walk up to the house. You need not wait."

The carriage-door was shut by Stearns, who bowed to its solitary occupant as it moved on. Then with a dramatic shake and nod of his head, which shook out the lengths of tawny curling hair, Stearns turned to the porch of the little cabin, where Pike was answering the kindly greetings of the beloved friend to whom he owed shelter and support.

As Bob came up the steps Major Leszinksky

turned to his little daughter, who was making a brave and successful effort to conquer her sobs.

"Now, Rue, ask your friends here to come up the hill to supper. I know you and Miss Mary have prepared a feast for us all."

"Yes, papa."

The blue-gray eyes flashed through misty tears as the little hands resolutely brushed away the falling drops, while the scarlet lips were set in firm lines which betokened a will that would rule her own spirit, no matter what pain the conquest might cost. With one quick, gasping sigh she continued, the low, clear, sweet voice growing steadier and firmer with each word:

"You must come up to supper, Pike. There is a little table set for you, and Bob, and my chief; and I am to pour your coffee."

She looked at Pike and Bob, who promised. Turning to the Indian, she waited a moment, and then addressed him impatiently:

"You will come, my chief?" The Indian silently shook his head.

Major Leszinksky spoke: "I trust you will come, Lo-loch-to-hoo-la. My little daughter would be greatly disappointed if the friend who

saved her life and gave her back to us should refuse to sit at the table she has prepared."

Rue had caught the chief's hand in hers while her father was speaking. She instinctively connected the chief's refusal with her stepmother, whom she was already inclined to antagonize. In place of the old condition of a protective equality and graciously patronizing sisterhood with Stephanie Castalar, there was about to be forced upon her a new and, to her, incomprehensible relationship—one that disturbed her ideas of proprietorship in her home and her father.

Moreover, the child, young as she was, was jealous for her mother. She perfectly remembered her mother, and knew that she herself had been second to her in the love of the father she worshipped. Had she not lost her mother it is possible she would have grown to be dissatisfied with the second place in the affection of both parents. Now the bitter seed had fallen into a quickening soil. As I have said, she was instantly jealous for her mother and as instantly jealous for herself. It was the beginning of the development of all the qualities of her race—of traits of character that had been dormant in the blood for centuries. From that moment fate rechristened her

with the name her father had playfully given her in her babyhood. The thought of the day he had called her "the young Voyvoda," and of Margaret's half-fearful, half-playful admission of the fitness and significance of the title, came to Major Leszinksky as, with an imperious, insistent manner, she addressed the Indian :

"You will come, my chief! It is my table. Stephanie"—with a glance at her father she corrected this to "Mamma Stephanie is not to be at my table. You will come!"

The words embarrassed all who were present. Rue's clairvoyance in the matter of the Indian and her stepmother enlightened Leszinksky. He remembered a thousand little, hitherto indefinable things in Stephanie Castalar's manner whenever the Indian entered her presence. It was clear to him that she neither forgot nor forgave the actors in that massacre at Castalar's Valley where all of her family were murdered. Without any knowledge of these circumstances, where the Pawnee chief had been an aggressor, Rue had divined her stepmother's antipathy to her friend. The circumstances of her life had developed her perceptive faculty to a wonderful quickness. She

had her first lesson in causation as the chief replied, rather to Leszinksky's thought than to her words:

"The lodge of his friend is shut to Lo-loch-to-hoo-la. The young squaw remembers that four winters ago Lo-loch-to-hoo-la was on the war-path by the Kiamesha. His love for the child he then found in his path, for the Morning Star that beamed on the dark hour of his life, for Leszinksky who has been his friend, was stronger in the heart of the Indian than his hatred of the oppressors who have wronged his people; and so he buried the hatchet and made peace with his enemies. But the Morning Star is with the Great Spirit, and Leszinksky has taken into his lodge the daughter of the half-breed Sioux whom the Pawnees chased, with his white father the thieving Indian trader, from the settlement on the Platte, to find him, after many winters had passed, on the south bank of the Canadian. His lands and cattle were bought with the blood-money for which his father sold the Pawnees to their enemies. The lies of the trader had filled the ears of the Great Father of the white men, and the Pawnees were driven from their lands to starve in the wilderness."

It was the first time Leszinksky had ever heard the Indian refer to the massacre at Castalar's. By an unspoken agreement they had avoided mention of that catastrophe, which Leszinksky had never attributed to personal revenge, but merely to the accidental finding of the settlement on the San Bois by the war-party.

It was Rue's first lesson in the wrongs of the Indian. It enlightened her much more fully than one could easily believe possible at so early an age and to so unripe an understanding. She had held the chief's hand while he was speaking; she pressed it affectionately when he made mention of his love for her, and for her mother. As his story ended she exclaimed impetuously:

"You shall not starve, my chief! You *shall* live with us. You shall eat at my table, I tell you!" And the voice rang loud and firm. "*My* table! I hate the people who were bad to you. I love you next to papa—better than Oscar, or Bob, or Pike. You will come with me, my chief. O my chief! you will always stay with me."

Her voice sank to a quivering moan of entreaty. The Indian caught her in his arms. He could not resist the entreaty of the child of his

love—the child he had found on the war-path and adopted as his own. The fiery eyes softened with the mist of unshed tears.

"Come," said Leszinksky softly, placing his hand on Lo-loch-to-hoo-la's shoulder, and together they went up the path under the leafless trees of the orchard.

BOOK FIRST.

PART SECOND.

HAGAR.

CHAPTER VI.

"The true gods sigh for the cost and pain—
For the reed which grows nevermore again
As a reed with the reeds in the river."

A LADY walked up and down the wide porch of a large, old-fashioned house built on a high, wooded knoll that overlooked the Hudson. She was a mere girl of nineteen, tall, dark, and stately, with a dignified carriage and a face which evinced a decided character. She was not beautiful, but there was in face and form latent possibility of beauty. She was one of those sallow, slender brunettes who may ripen to a rich perfection or wither to positive ugliness.

It was a warm, breezeless morning of the early summer, and something, either in the lady's mood or in the weather, had deepened the color of the full red lips, and tinged the usually pale cheeks to a faint crimson. Gradually the slow, stately step slackened, and there were long pauses at the end of the porch commanding a view of occasional stretches of the road, upon which a horseman appeared and disappeared until he finally vanished in a turn through the hills.

After a longer pause the lady crossed the porch to an open glass door, through which she entered the library. She stood for a moment beside a table, idly turning the leaves of a book of engravings, then walked slowly about the room with the air of a person unacquainted with the objects it contained. Opposite the door leading into the hall, and at right angles with the window through which she had entered, was a curtained recess.

Pulling aside the heavy drapery, she found a door, fastened with a bolt which she pushed back, only to find that the door still resisted opening. Smilingly she murmured, "Bluebeard's closet!" and then tried a door oppo-

site the window. It opened into a billiard-room, which also had a curtained recess, the counterpart in position and fastenings of the one in the library.

"They evidently open into the same apartment," she thought. A certain pleasurable curiosity made her forgetful of her previous preoccupation.

She rang the bell and told the servant who answered it to send her maid with the keys of the house. With her maid, a bright, intelligent mulatto, came the housekeeper, who asked, with a slight appearance of embarrassment: "What keys are wanted, madame?"

"All the keys. I wish to see the house."

The housekeeper left the room. The maid, with the respectfully familiar air of the Virginian servant born to service and "brought up with the family" (to use their own definition of position), walked to where her mistress was seated, and, while rearranging the heavy bands of hair that shaded the temples, said:

"I tell you this's a mighty funny sort o' place, Mis' Kate; mighty queer folks 'bout this house. I didn't say nothin' 'bout it this mornin', 'cause Marse Capin was likely to come in

any minute, but I certainly did see a ghost las' night."

"Nonsense, Rose! A woman of your age has surely outgrown such childish folly. You'll be trying *obi* charms next, if such notions get into that stupid head of yours. I thought you knew better."

"Heap wiser folks than me, Mis' Kate, believes in ghosts, and them *obi* conjurers—it don't do no good to get thar ill-will; but I ain't skeered of 'em like some o' our fool plantation hands is. But, Mis' Kate, for sho' I did see in the hall out thar somebody all in black when I come down from your room after you was gone to bed las' night."

"It might have been one of the maids or the housekeeper. Besides, who ever heard of a ghost in black?"

"No, Mis' Kate. 'Twahn't none of them. They was all over thar in thar rooms over the kitchen when I got thar. I run so fast and so hard I stumbled as I turn in that passage, and the housekeeper she come out and asked 'what was the matter, and if I couldn't find my way to my room.' I didn't say nothin', I was so upsot, and she called to the girls

to open thar door and show me the way to my room."

"Then it was a shadow—possibly your own."

"No, Mis' Kate, 'twahn't no shadder; leastways 'twahn't mine. If it was a shadder it was might'ly like somebody I used to see—somebody with thar back hair tucked up like yourn, and little soft curls put back so."

And she smoothed her mistress' bands to indicate the manner in which the curls were caught back from the face.

"Well, whom did the curly-headed woman resemble?"

"Lucy. You don't 'member Lucy, Mis' Kate. She belonged to Mis' Margaret Cart'ret, and she went with her out to the Injun country. She was 'most white—white as some white folks, whiter 'an most poor white folks. An' she had long brown curls, on'y she didn't we'r 'em put up like she had 'em last night."

"But a ghost wouldn't change the fashion of its curls; so you see you are a little old goose." And the mistress smiled at the maid.

"Well, if 'twahn't a ghost, Mis' Kate, it certainly was Lucy. I hearn that Mis' Margaret sold her. She must a-done something mighty bad or

Mis' Margaret never would a-sold her. I know thar was some old story about Mis' Margaret a-findin' her in a graveyard, where her mammy was lying dead on the grave of the biggest gambler ever was in Richmond. I 'member when he was killed; that was 'fore you was born, Mis' Kate. Cap'n Coleman shot him down on Main Street—shot him just like he was a mad dog; an' folks say he was Lucy's father. But thar was whar Mis' Margaret found Lucy, in the graveyard, and old Marse Tom Cart'ret bought her fur Mis' Margaret—bought her right outen a graveyard."

And she ended her story with a low, gurgling laugh that stopped abruptly as the gaunt, stern-faced housekeeper returned with the keys.

"Open that door," said the lady, pointing to the curtained recess.

"Captain Hartley has the keys of that room," the housekeeper answered; then added, as the lady hesitated to follow her through the door of the hall that she held open: "I have nothing to do with the rooms on that side of the house. They are Captain Hartley's private rooms. They are closed when he is away, and when he is here his man attends to them."

"Very well; you can unlock all of the other rooms and open the blinds. Every room will be needed next week; the house will then be full of guests. If my husband prefers to use these rooms we will take them; if not they can be put in order for other use."

She haughtily nodded dismissal to the housekeeper, who left the room, and sank back into the easy-chair.

Another low gurgle of laughter from the mulatto, who soon found breath to say:

"That white woman thinks she's mistis of this place yit; that's what comes of havin' poor white folks 'roun. If you wants that key, Mis' Kate, I know whar to get it."

"Then get it at once," said Mrs. Hartley.

The imperious tone of the first syllable told the intelligent servant more truly than the words that this mood required silent obedience. The affectionately familiar air instantly changed to respectful attention.

"Yes, Mis' Kate."

She was gone but a few moments, and returned with a bunch of keys.

A look from her mistress instructed her. The keys were hastily tried and the door was opened.

Rose entered the room and threw back the shutters and an outer door from which a short flight of steps led under and through a vine-covered arbor. The paved walk and leafy trellis ended at a small gate opening into a shrubbery of forest and fruit trees.

Mrs. Hartley, who had held the curtains aside while Rose fitted the key, let them fall together as she closed the door of the library behind her and entered the room, which was altogether different in character from any she had yet seen in the house.

The windows were Norman arches of stained glass, the doors and wood-work of heavy oak. The panelled, gray-painted walls were hung with engravings surmounted with curious bits of armor, glistening arms, and trophies of the chase. The polished oaken floor was partly covered with rugs of Eastern make and beautifully-preserved skins from which the raised heads of the animals seemed on watch for intruders.

The young wife forgot in her delight the late jar to her dignity, which had been given more by the housekeeper's manner than by her words. The words were civilly spoken, but something in the speaker's face had implied a higher authority

in the house than this newly-arrived mistress. The offence was one the imperious lady would neither overlook nor forgive; but for the moment it was forgotten, and Rose, magnetically conscious of the change in her mistress's mood, again resumed the easy manner of an affectionate and favorite servant.

"O Rose! this is the most beautiful room I ever saw."

"It is pretty, Mis' Kate; but I think Marse Cap'n might a-bought a whole carpet. If the room had one of them fine velvet ones like we got at home it would a-been a sight prettier."

"Rose, you simpleton, there is not a room at Belleview or at the Cedars that can compare with this."

"No, Mis' Kate, thar ain't at the Cedars. You see marster won't fix that up till Mis' Margaret's little girl is growed up—that is, if she lives; if she don't live, then Marse Tom comes in, and 'twouldn't be no use fubbishin' it up unless he got married. It's good 'nuff now for all the hunters and the dogs in the county to crowd in. But marster's new parlors, which he fixed up when he married Marse Cap'n's sister, is heap finer 'an this."

Her smiling mistress was walking from engraving to engraving when Rose stopped her speech to try still another door. It opened into the room adjoining the billiard-room, and completed the square of the one-storied wing.

Mrs. Hartley had not missed her loquacious maid until a sudden exclamation caused her to turn to the door of the newly-opened room, now flooded with light, where Rose was standing beside a portfolio which had fallen from an easel she struck in opening the window. From its scattered contents of engravings and sketches she had picked out the one piece of bright color, and was standing in open-mouthed wonder gazing at a large oil-painting that had evidently been cut from its frame and rudely folded to fit in the portfolio.

As Mrs. Hartley crossed the threshold Rose turned. In a thrilling tone of fright and amazement she said:

"It's her, Mis' Kate—it's the ghost!"

"What ghost?"

"The one I tole you 'bout—the woman I saw in the hall las' night that looked like Mis' Margaret's Lucy. If she's dead"—and there was the tremor of a positive terror in her voice—

"'twas her ghost a-lookin' for somebody—this here chiles, may be. If she an't dead, then she's a livin' here; fur this 's her picture, Mis' Kate." And she held up the canvas for her mistress to see it.

The subject of the picture was the hackneyed one of "Hagar in the Desert," but it had not been treated in the usual conventional manner nor in strict accordance with sacred history.

Beneath a group of feathery date-palms in the centre of a green oasis a spring had burst out of a rocky little depression and was winding through a leafy channel to the sands. Prostrate beside it the beautiful Egyptian was dipping up the sparkling drops with one hand while the other clutched the fold of a scarlet mantle upon which was lying her fainting child. The artist had selected the moment when the exhausted mother gains the life-saving shelter of the palms—her last effort expended in that supreme struggle of motherhood with the burning sands and the fiery sun.

There were grave faults in the painting—a critic could have found them by the dozen—but there was also revealed in it the soul of a great artist. It was so finely spiritual in meaning that

a sensualist would have turned from it in dismay. It was not a temptation, but a reproach to passion. The ragged little sandals, the bleeding feet, the wasted arms, the shadows on the face half veiled by the heavy masses of the fallen hair, were all parts of her story, pitifully accented by the mournful look in the soft brown eyes and the unforgetting tenderness with which she clung to the folds of the mantle about her child.

It had a wonderful effect upon the proud woman, who instinctively knew she was looking on the face of a rival.

Through the fierce anger which flashed quick and hot in every quivering nerve of the indignant wife when Rose clothed the ghost in flesh and found its pictured semblance in the bedchamber of her husband, she felt a contemptuous pity for this faded Hagar.

But the child? She restlessly moved from point to point of view to see if the light would not somewhere penetrate the tangle of waving hair and let her see clearly the features of the hidden face.

She was jealous of the child!

It was the rival of the life that had just begun to beat beneath her own heart. She knew she

need not say, "Cast out this bondwoman." The sad, fearful eyes of the pictured face said that all loss had befallen that mother except loss of her child, and the clinging hold of the scarlet mantle told of an agony of apprehension lest that loss also should come.

There is a prescience of the heart! It was that which taught the inexperienced wife the story dimly outlined in the pictured face of the Hagar, and it was a story which affected her own life. Her brother had opposed her marriage. She knew from his words of warning—words she had only imperfectly understood—that there were histories in the past of her husband unfit for her knowledge. Her father had not cordially approved of his wife's brother as a suitor for his daughter, but his daughter's avowal of her preference and his wife's entreaties had won his reluctant consent. His doubts were met and hushed with those pleas which the world is so willing to make for the reformed profligate.

But now the young wife was face to face with an episode in her husband's life that was not altogether buried out of sight in the buried past. She did not doubt for an instant the identity of Rose's ghost. The Hagar of the picture was in

the house to which her husband had brought her. There had already been, in her short married life, moments of more than half-awakening from the glamour of her love-dream—moments of torture from the vague imaginings, the unrest, that precedes distrust. The yielding courtesy, the deferential admiration of the lover, were already things of the past. The husband of six months had either forgotten or was recklessly careless of the methods by which he had won her. The stately gallantry, the finished manner, with which the man of mature age had charmed her out of the circle of her youth was an investiture of ceremony donned with holiday attire, but now rarely on show in the narrowed circle of their home life.

There was already a melodramatic tone in this marriage duo—a prophecy of tragedy in the silence of certain chords. It lacked the shading of the playful badinage, of the sentimental babble, that mocks the wisdom of man by winning the wisest to the delight of Love's wise folly.

In the crisis of sensation which this discovery of the picture precipitated came the bitter knowledge of good and evil. It was something more than the ordinary divestiture of romance—some-

thing different from that loss of the ideal in its fusion with the real which is the varied but constantly recurring experience of marriage. It was not the mere uncovering of the feet of clay, the flaw in the divinity of the god, but the proof that the idol was brutally and sensually human. It was a profound calamity, for it extinguished the sacred fire on the altar of marriage; it was infinitely sorrowful, for it struck at the existence of an infinite love; it was the end of faith, of reverence.

The young wife had begun to learn the lesson which, in its last letters, spells love's death-warrant. Its phrases were the varied moods of the egoist—indifference, complacence, passion, carping criticism, and, most grievous of all to a young, proud, loving nature, sneering silence.

Face to face with the portrait to which Rose had given name and meaning, Mrs. Hartley felt it to be a premeditated insult. All the lesser wrongs to her love crowded about her as witnesses against her husband. No excusing thought suggested that accident or carelessness had left here a forgotten picture. To her it was simply the portrait of a woman whose presence in the house was an outrage; of a child

whose existence was a bar to the happiness of motherhood. She was too young, too inexperienced more than dimly to understand this new future which had fallen like a pall over the dead-born future of her girlish dreams. She did not yet understand that when trust is impossible and loyalty dies of shuddering repulsion the end has come. She did not know that this freshly-turned page in her life was only a new reading of an every-day story.

An over-indulged, motherless girl had followed her fancy—or, to speak more truly, had followed a skilfully hidden leading of fancy—into the outspread net of a sensualist. Yet she was not altogether his victim, but partly the victim of that vague longing of the springtime, that tumult of the senses which flows from the heart of nature through all sentient things, that "need of love" which is essentially human.

A wise mother would have shielded her daughter from the enemy who found aids in her innocence and purity; would have taught her to distinguish the difference between the leading and the illumination of the senses. Such a priestess, if she has listened understandingly to the celestial harmonies, is a divinely-inspired teacher.

She has learned that the soul of marriage is truth, which is love, and that without love marriage is the mere coupling of two galley-slaves; yet, that if truth be wounded through the falsehood of one, a martyr may win heavenward by carrying the burden of a festering corpse.

Before the morning stars sang together, souls, for whom the world was made, were fashioned for each other — male and female created He them. When we understand what is meant by this unequal halving of human souls we shall be wise as gods. For this is the hidden mystery of the ages, the secret imprisoned in the sphinx, where the soul of the woman has partially escaped the bondage of the animal, and with brooding eyes watches for the coming of the deliverer who is to lift her to companionship with the immortals. This is the riddle of old Egypt, entombed in stone, which has puzzled, which still puzzles, philosopher and theologian, which has baffled the poet, the accredited interpreter of the gods.

CHAPTER VII.

"By a bridge I cannot see
Comes that far-off memory."

WHILE holding the canvas for Mrs. Hartley to see the painting, Rose had again, and with more minute circumstance, related the story of Lucy.

The child in the picture had touched a fresh key in Rose's memories of the past, and these memories were daggers of certainty in the mind of her mistress.

"Yes, she did have a child; 'twas 'bout that Mis' Margaret sold her. You see, Mis' Kate, Lucy was a quarteroon, but the child was white; an' its father bought 'em both an' carried 'em 'way off north somewhere. I wonder whar this picture of her come from, anyway?"

Something which she saw just then in the face of her mistress enlightened her. With that instinctive accordance with the mood of her mistress that I have already mentioned as a quality in the African blood, she stopped in the very

flood of speech and waited, still silently holding the extended canvas.

"There, Rose, you can fold up the painting. Did you find it in the portfolio?"

"Yes, Mis' Kate. It busted out o' this side-pocket here when I picked the things up."

"Very well, put it back again where you found it. You see you dreamed the ghost; an *obi* witch always dreams of what she will see next day." There was a proud, smiling scorn in Mrs. Hartley's face, yet under that mask Rose saw a point of interrogation.

"I did see Lucy las' night, Mis' Kate. I didn't dream it, an' I ain't no witch nuther. If I 'ad a-seen her when I was a-dreamin' she'd a-looked just 'zactly like she did when she used to be at ole Marse Tom Cart'ret's. But she didn't. I didn't rightways know her jus' at first, but I thought she was mightily like somebody I seen long ago. I reckon that was what skeered me into thinking 'twas a ghost. She's a heap paler 'an she used to be"—here there was a half-apologetic glance as she went on, "an' a heap more like a lady than a quarteroon"—then a short silence; but seeing no change in the proud face still turned to the pic-

ture, Rose continued: "May be Lucy's livin' somewhar 'bout here, an' she might a-came to see the housekeeper las' night. That stuck-up rascal o' Marse Cap'n's might a-let her in. The do' of the libr'y was open, an' the light shined on her face out the do' so I could see her plain--'most as plain as I sees you, Mis' Kate. Not rightways a-knowin' at first jus' who she was, but seein' her look like somebody I couldn't jus' make out who, was what struck me all a-heap so 'bout her bein' a ghost."

Mrs. Hartley went into the next room again and examined more closely the engravings and sketches upon the walls, but found no hint of the Hagar—"Nothing! unless it is this lovely miniature painted on ivory—this angelic child's face with the violet eyes and the dusky, auburn hair. The hair, in its flowing ripples of wavy bronze, resembles the tangle of soft, loose curls which hid the child's face in that picture of Hagar—this is the face that was hidden in that picture! Hagar may be deposed, forgotten, but the child has kept a place in the house of her father."

Mrs. Hartley turned from the miniature, trying to fix in her thought a half-recollection, a

fleeting, puzzling impression, the meaning of something to which she had once refused to listen.

What was it her brother had tried to tell her? Was it some story of the garrison life of her husband? a mention of her cousin Margaret—something the Leszinkskys had said or known? some story of a beautiful slave?

Presently, in a dim way, she remembered Lucy.

Memory had unrolled the panorama of life backward and found the figures left in the past—in the lost fairy-land of childhood. They came slowly, like visions in a dream—her beautiful cousin and her cousin's pretty slave. Slowly, slowly came the stately, blue-eyed lady, and the slender, lithe attendant with the long brown curls, the soft brown eyes, the shapely little hands, and the delicate feet—the quadroon with the creamy color of a freshly-opened magnolia-bud.

Again Mrs. Hartley turned to the miniature to study the features, the expression; to see clearly the likeness that had attracted and riveted her attention—the likeness to her husband complexly mingled with another likeness.

Rose had followed her mistress after rearranging the contents of the fallen portfolio and reclosing the windows in the bed-room where she had stumbled into what she felt was an astounding discovery. Full of its importance to her mistress, and by consequence to herself, yet with instinctive and ready apprehension of her mistress's desire to be alone, she had gone out under the vine-covered arbor, and, seated on the lower step of the open door, awaited silently some expression of will from her silent lady.

"Rose!" The tone was impatient and imperative.

"Yes, Mis' Kate," and the mulatto was instantly on her feet.

"Did you ask the housekeeper for those keys you brought?"

"No, Mis' Kate, 'cause she didn't know nothin' about 'em. When I picked up Marse Cap'n's coat this mornin'—the travellin'-coat he had on yestedday—a bunch o' keys jingled in the pocket. So when the housekeeper said he allus kept his own keys I was sho' the ones in the pocket was the ones you wanted."

"Did she know you had them? Do any of the servants know we are here?"

"No, Mis' Kate, none of 'em. That rascal of Marse Cap'n's lef' the place this mornin' at daylight, and the maids is up-stairs a-helpin' the housekeeper with all them rooms as was locked up. She's a-gettin' out the linen an' a-uncoverin' the things, an' they's a-sweepin' an' a-fixin' an' a-dustin' fur you to see. She didn't know nuthin' 'bout what I went to yo' rooms after. I did think, when I met her up in the passage, I'd show them keys to her jus' to pay her for her imperence 'bout Marse Cap'n allus a-keepin' the keys of his private rooms; but then she asked me, mighty polite-like, 'to please get you to wait, Mis' Kate, and not to see the rooms up-stairs till they was in order, fur she hadn't had a minute sooner to 'range 'em, 'cause she didn't know till yestedday mornin' you had got back to dis country and was a-comin' here las' night. An' she had been busy all day yestedday gettin' your rooms ready—the rooms Marse Cap'n had writ from Englan' to have ready.'"

"You are sure she did not see the keys?"

"No, Mis' Kate, I'm sho' she don't know I found the keys." And Rose, who had kept them in her hand after locking the bed-room

door, held them up to show her mistress. "She couldn't see 'em, fur they was in my pocket; she was a-fixin' things gen'ally, and not studyin' 'bout me. She thinks you'se in the libr'y, Mis' Kate, and she won't come thar if you don't ring."

"Fasten the windows and then lock up the rooms. Put the keys where you got them. You should not have taken them."

The maid looked wonderingly after her mistress; she had never before been rebuked for obedience to the least caprice, the slightest expression of a wish of the proud and wilful lady who was walking rapidly down through the vine-covered arbor, and who stopped to open the latticed gate as Rose closed the windows and doors and went into the library. The mulatto locked the door behind her, put the keys into her pocket, drew the curtains together that hid the door, and, stooping to arrange a refractory fold, found it caught in a broken link of the chain of a small leather satchel or portemonnaie. She walked with it to the window. As she opened it and leisurely examined the contents her reflections shaped themselves into words:

"I am a-findin' things fur sho'. Fust place, Lucy, what I ain't seen befo' since Mis' Margaret Cart'ret got married. Then them keys. Then that picture o' Lucy, what upsot Mis' Kate worse 'an that rascal of Marse Cap'n's upsot me this morn' when he tole me I had done seen the spirit of Marse Cap'n's aunt, what walked constant in this part of the house. Now I know that rascal was jus' a-lyin' like he allus does, an' I am glad I didn't tell him who I thought the ghost look like. He thinks I dun know nothin' 'bout Lucy, an' that I ain't found out that Marse Cap'n's jus' as big a rascal as he is. Two of the devil's servants in this house, an' bofe of 'em sot agin me and Mis' Kate. No use of Mis' Kate tryin' to do nothin'. She just got to put up with that head devil, 'cep Marse Tom finds out the way he do. But Mis' Kate she's too proud to tell what a mess she's made of marryin', an' I dun know what to do with this here thing now I'se found it. I know it must a-been Lucy's, an' I don't want to leave it here for them rascals to get it, or may be some of the servants as would keep it; an' I don't know whar to find Lucy; an' I can't give it to Mis' Kate—she might tell me like she did 'bout the keys. But, gracious

Marster in heaven! yonder is Mis' Kate bare-headed in the sun; she's whiter 'an a sheet. I know what that means. It means the Cart'ret blood is up for sho'."

CHAPTER VIII.

"Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds."

THE shadows were lengthening and deepening in Broadway. The red sun, sinking into a bed of purple and gold, set all the windows of the city aflame as the slanting yellow rays caught new color from the rosy clouds and the tinted air. It was the hour and the light which give grace and tenderness to architecture; which brings into a softened relief every fluted column, every tapering spire, all the beauty of pointed mansards and curving arches. It is the fairy hour of transformation, that works a magic spell in giving to sight the beautiful in cities—the hour which curtains with its own loveliness the ugliness and uniform deformity of the brown blocks and solid squares. It is not so true as the dawn. It does not lift the sharp outlines heavenward to meet the coming light, but it gives to the crowded haunts of men the charm that moonlight gives

the shadowy glade. It is not the hour of the sun-worshipper, but of the earth-lover. The early morning, the uprising sun, brings to man the sense of a freshening of being, of the coming of a divinity; the evening curtains space and shuts him in the mystic twilight with magnified shadows.

. . . . . .

A carriage stopped at the private entrance of the New York Hotel. It had two occupants—Mrs. Hartley and her maid. The lady threw open the door, sprang to the sidewalk, and was in the hallway questioning a clerk before Rose had gathered together her parcels.

"Is Judge Cartaret here?"

"Yes, madam; he arrived this morning with Mrs. Cartaret. I think the judge drove out this afternoon with a friend who called for him, but I will send to see if Mrs. Cartaret is in."

"No, do not send. Can you give me rooms for myself and maid without delay? I wish to go to my room immediately. When Judge Cartaret returns let me know at once."

The clerk hesitated an instant, then with a quick, judicial glance at the proud, cold face of his interlocutor and another at the respectable

Rose, who entered with her collected parcels, followed by a porter with the luggage, which he saw was marked "Cartarèt," he grew smilingly suave and acquiescent.

"Certainly, madam. We have a very comfortable, cool corner suite on the third floor immediately above Judge Cartaret's. I will get the keys and send up the luggage. I will speak to Judge Cartaret the moment he returns. Who shall I say wishes to see him?"

"His daughter."

As he left to get the keys Rose said in a sepulchral tone, as if half in fear of speech and half afraid of what she was about to say: "I think, Mis' Kate, Marse Cap'n's here. I saw that rascal o' his'n stop that driver that brung us from the railroad jus' now at the corner thar. He thought I'd done come in, but I hadn't; I was a-pickin' up this shawl I had let drop."

"Very well. It does not matter."

The proud face was unruffled and the stately step was slow and deliberate as they crossed the hall and followed the carrier of the keys up the stairs.

A few moments later a small, slender, dark-visaged man (the personage Rose designates as

"that rascal of Marse Cap'n's") knocked at the door of a room on the second floor immediately beneath Mrs. Hartley's.

"Come in," in a sharp, rasping tone. The man opened the door, but did not enter. The same voice called more peremptorily, "What is it, Marten?"

"I wish to speak with you a minute, sir."

"Then come in and shut the door."

The man obeyed, and stood waiting, looking with ill-concealed embarrassment from his master to a lady who, seated in a low easy-chair, was fanning herself violently. It would have been evident to a less acute perception than that of the saturnine Leperello that he had interrupted a stormy discussion. His master gave him little time for observation or reflection.

"What is so important that you come to my sister's room to find me?"

There was a moment longer of silence.

"What is it, I say? Are you dumb?"

"I have something to tell you, sir."

"Well, tell it. If you are such an idiot that you came here for a mere nothing, leave the room at once."

"I did not think, sir"—he glanced hesitat-

ingly at the lady—"I thought possibly you would come, sir"—a half-muttered oath interrupted him, but Captain Hartley controlled his temper sufficiently to leave that sentence unfinished, and added:

"If it is the Oakhill affair tell all you know. My sister has heard of this idiotic blunder of the housekeeper's in letting Lucy stay there."

"Mrs. Hartley is here, sir—in the hotel—her maid is with her. They came on the train that leaves Yonkers at five o'clock. She is registered 'Miss Cartaret,' and a message is written at the office for her father to come to her as soon as he returns."

"What room has she?" The question came through half-shut lips that were white with anger.

"The one immediately over this, sir."

Captain Hartley started toward the door, when his sister sprang up and caught his arm, saying to Marten, in a tone which exacted and received instant obedience: "Go into the hall and close the door. Do not let any one come in, but wait there until you are called." When the door closed she turned to her brother, letting go his arm as she said:

"You are about to do a very foolish thing.

Kate is justly incensed at the presence of that woman and her child at Oakhill. No doubt the poor girl thinks she has found the cause of your indifference to her, your brutality; you need not frown or sneer at me. I have neither respect for you nor fear of you. I know you too thoroughly—"

He interrupted her with "We know each other too thoroughly."

"No, you are not so wise as you think; there is in my composition a little leaven of honesty, of feeling, utterly lacking in you, that at times forces me to side with the right. True, I helped you win Kate. I used my influence with her father and gained his reluctant consent to your marriage. Utterly false as I knew you to be, you succeeded in deceiving me into the belief that you loved her. But for that I would have refused. Yes, you may smile at my stupidity. I deserve even your contempt for believing an unscrupulous sensualist could love a pure and honorable woman."

"Forgive me, madam, that I have heretofore underrated your sense of honor, your very disinterested affection for your stepdaughter, your devotion to your husband."

Tone and words had the effect intended. He put his sister in a rage and on the defensive, and thus won double advantage in the quarrel he forced. From this moment he kept his temper while inflaming hers. He skilfully avoided recrimination or discussion of himself by adroit assent to her charges, and still more adroit questioning, which goaded her into a fury that finally quelled anger by its very vehemence. Then with seeming frankness—the man was a born actor and only through perverseness or carelessness ever forgot his rôle—he laughed aloud as the storm stilled, caught and kissed his sister's hands, exclaiming:

"A truce, a truce, sister! and I will promise to sign any articles of agreement you present. Make your own terms. You commenced by warning me against a folly. Now I am quite ready to be wise or to profit by your wisdom. What shall I do, what shall I say, and to whom and how shall I say it?"

In the beginning of the conversation Mrs. Cartaret had drawn her brother away from the door, distrusting what she knew of the keen sense of hearing possessed by the ubiquitous Marten. Thus it happened they were near an open win-

dow, directly under another upon which a tearful, hot face was lying hidden in slender hands.

The noise of Broadway, in silencing all lesser sound, left the young wife free to sob out her grief in the profound isolation of that constant roar which helps to make the loneliness of cities. She had fled to Sanctuary and found it in this solitary room, from which she had barred out even the faithful Rose. A lull in the stream in the street, a pause in the tide, whose evening flood was about to ebb, let the voices come upward from the window beneath Mrs. Hartley's. At the first sound she started, and then let her head droop again on the folded hands until her husband's laugh struck her like a blow. She sprang to her feet and tremblingly closed the window as if shutting out an actual and evil presence; then, throwing herself upon the bed, sobbed herself to sleep as would a tired and grieved child.

An hour later a steady knocking at the door awakened her. A voice she knew was her stepmother's was calling, "Kate! Kate! I wish to see you. I must speak with you at once."

She tried to resist this assault, to defend her solitude by silence; but the continued knocking

and the varied tones of entreaty and persuasion compelled consent. She bathed her flushed and tear-stained face and opened the door.

At the outposts Mrs. Cartaret had an easy victory; for a moment after her entrance the girl was lying unresistant in her arms, telling in gasping, broken sobs the story of her sorrows. She had no distrust of her stepmother—she was too loyal, too true to doubt her father's wife. Mrs. Cartaret had been uniformly kind; careless but complaisant. She had not interfered with the expressed or implied wishes of either of Judge Cartaret's children, except as a playful and gracious ally when their father's indulgence was difficult to win. Kate had not seen how entirely she was led by her stepmother in her marriage. In fact, Mrs. Cartaret had rather earnestly warned the girl against her brother as a suitor, but, curiously enough, the warning had served to strengthen a wavering fancy. Her stepmother had urged: "My brother is so much your senior, the match is so unequal; in fact, I am rather astonished at this absorbing passion of his. I had fancied he was past the glamour of maidens' glances. I thought he had lost his illusions, was a disenchanted, world-weary man,

who would finish his life as he had lived its morning—alone. I did not think he would set his all upon the desperate chance of winning you."

And then the soft hands caressingly smoothed the girl's dusky locks, and rich, full lips kissed her and called her "sister." Thus the faith of womanhood was belied by half lies and perverted truths, by falsehood which was cowardly and cruel. For this was a wanton wrecking of the divine in woman by the treason of woman—a denial of sex, a wilful perversion of the faith enshrined in the ark of motherhood.

To go back to the beginning of the last paragraph. The outposts were taken, but there Mrs. Cartaret's victory rested. She had captured confidence, but she could not dislodge the forces which had taken the fortress. The false Love who had blindfolded the girl's fancy had loosed his bandage and deserted. Contempt and hatred had followed violence and brutality, and crept into the empty citadel. Mrs. Cartaret's persuasive words fell fruitless of result when she pleaded for forgiveness and reconciliation.

The girl had borne her minor trials nobly. She had offered neither reproach nor resistance

to tyranny and scorn. She had never even thought of reprisal. She had accepted the unhappiness of her new life as an unexpected accident of marriage, as something painful for which she could not blame herself, nor yet altogether any one else. Unconsciously she had blasphemed both love and marriage by generalizing her wretchedness. Her innocence and inexperience aided in her self-deception. She confounded Eros with Anteros, and saw only a deity of the nether world.

Mrs. Hartley was not merely angry with her husband. The pity of it was that she was not angry with him; for had she loved him truly she would have been angry at Love's defection. But now for her husband she had only contempt, while the knowledge of Love's lesion which had come to her made her almost loathe herself.

The last refuge of self-respect was contempt for the man who had led her into this cave of horrors. Then, as she saw no visible outlet in the future, no way of escape without dragging her pride through the dirt of public scandal, to contempt was added hatred.

Late that night Mrs. Cartaret left her bro-

ther's wife. The self-appointed ambassadress had failed except in two points: on certain conditions the young wife would return to Oakhill. This was a concession to opposite influences—to fear of the world and to affection. Kate had been brought up to reverence conventionalities. She had given a very sincere friendship and affection to her father's wife. Her father's wife was her husband's sister. The doubled influence won a truce.

CHAPTER IX.

"Never on this side of the grave again,
On this side of the river,
On this side of the garner of the grain,
Never!"

THERE were guests at Oakhill through the entire summer and fall—relatives or friends of the Cartarets, mostly Virginians, but there was a leaven of the extreme South. An occasional creole from New Orleans or Mobile —three or four of those exceptionally beautiful women, those exquisite flowers of race and climate, those wonderful Latin and Saxon hybrids—but, pshaw! I shall not try to do in pen and ink roughly the portraits that Cable has painted. But there were others, unique specimens, that as yet Cable has not—hybrids of curious quality, where strength and endurance mingle with strength and fire; Carolinians, compounds of French Huguenots and Scotch Highlanders; Kentuckians, enlarged by the boiling fusion of Saxon and Celt; Georgians

that have brought a queer tinge of Oglethorpe's queer colony into their latest graftings.

The marriage of Judge Cartaret's daughter to Captain Hartley, the New York millionaire (in 1850 a millionaire was a more infrequent coruscation in society than a tripled sextuple millionaire is in the reign of King Arthur), was an event that had gathered together the Southern clans. Those old slave-holding Virginian Lords Paramount, that untitled peerage whose oral history was as real as if it had been chronicled in Debrett, were at Bellevue in full force at the time of the wedding; and they were now well represented at Oakhill, to give the bride a welcome back from her wedding journey in Europe. The Cartarets dated from the earliest colonial days—from the period when a few powerful families divided the State into districts which were mere appanages of a strong aristocracy. They were connected, through the intermarriages of over a century, with nearly all of the principal families.

Leadership in the State during her semi-feudal system was almost a thing of heritage. Certain families had a tacitly recognized supremacy in the direction of public affairs and a very pro-

nounced influence in society. They were the despots of political conventions, almost the arbiters of law and thought. They formed an oligarchy which was also an autocracy. To belong to it was a privilege of caste, not a reward of merit. The self-made man who forced himself into their number had an involuntary and instinctive feeling that he was there only upon sufferance. In fact, he not only fought his way thither, but he was forced to wage a continual conflict to keep the position he had conquered.

It was this state of society with its arrogant rule, this democratic aristocracy built upon a corner-stone of slavery, where rank was marked by the number of negroes and the breadth of acres, that sent the Jacksons to Tennessee and drove Henry Clay to Kentucky. The son of a petty farmer, the near relative of a recusant Baptist preacher, could not rise in the Old Dominion to a plane of equality with politicians who plumed themselves upon their Jeffersonian principles. Yet (strange contradiction!) these same dominative, aggressive, self-assertive insolents, who presumed upon a few prosperous decades, were the same big-hearted, free-handed

democrats who gave the vast extent of the Northwest to the general government on the one condition that it should be free territory! Some of these Virginians had higher patents of nobility, better title to consideration, to respect, than numerous slaves and broad acres. Notable among such stood the Cartarets. First, they were a historic race. (I wish here to enter my protest against that sham sentiment of a false republicanism which discredits the honorable records of a brave and honest family. It is a puerility to undervalue blood in the human animal when we know that in daily transactions where other animals are on sale it has a high-priced and very marketable value. Because thousands of mushrooms have upsprung in a land first parched by war and then watered by prosperity I do not choose to join the common crowd in its genuflections before the mushrooms. I hate the snobbery that turns its back upon its obligations to principles and qualities long incarnate in some proudly honest or honorable family, to bend before the loutish possessor of the filthy gatherings of greed.)

The Cartarets were part and parcel of the history of England. They had served in field and

cabinet. They had carried an unstained name through centuries of trial. One of their noblest representatives fought with Prince Rupert, and afterwards lost life and lands in an unsuccessful effort to save King Charles the First. His oldest son shared the ill-fortunes of Charles the Second, but immediately after the Restoration retired from court to repair his fortune by close economy and diligent care of his impoverished estate. The second son, Thomas Cartaret, the first of a succession of Thomas Cartarets which lasted through a century and a half in Virginia, had run away to the plantations with the daughter of one of the most bitter haters of the "Cavaliers" in that body of bitter haters—the Long Parliament. A large grant of land from Charles the Second, just after the Restoration, established the first Virginian Cartaret as a magnate in the land. Adherents of the Stuarts, the Cartarets detested the house of Hanover and were ready to take arms when the cry of revolt raised by Massachusetts reached Virginia. The day after Cornwallis's surrender they returned to their plantations on the James River, where they led the quietly useful lives of country gentlemen, diversified by occasional winters

in Richmond and Washington. Judge Cartaret was the first barrister and jurist in the family. His first wife, the mother of Mrs. Hartley, was a New Orleans creole of Spanish extraction; the second was a beautiful and childless widow, the Mrs. Cartaret I have already presented to you. She met the handsome, wealthy Southerner in New York in January of 1844, and married him in the following March. At the time of Judge Cartaret's marriage to Mrs. Hilton, Captain Hartley was in the army. But in the April after his sister's marriage he resigned, having inherited a great-uncle's estate. It was a fortune of which the Hartleys had despaired. But a sudden and terrible loss, and change of humor in a petulant old man, disappointed expectant heirs and brought to the Hartleys that unexpected which is so constantly happening.

We now return to the point at which this chapter began. Captain Hartley was absent from Oakhill during the summer and early fall. "There were unsettled affairs of his inheritance that had suffered during his absence in Europe." That was the explanation given to Judge Cartaret, whom he met at the New York Hotel, on the morning after the events described in the last

chapter, when the judge returned from a night's visit to a friend on Long Island.

Another explanation was volunteered: "My sister and Kate left for Oakhill this morning. It is so hot in town that I begged them not to wait to see me off. I go immediately West—possibly as far as Santa Fé. There are some matters that I can arrange more readily than any agent I could send to New Mexico. Of course it is a disagreeable thing to have to go just as we expect the friends who promised to visit us on our return. But I trusted to your kindness. I hope you and my sister will stay with Kate. I beg of you to act as host in my absence. Of course I shall return as soon as I can get through with these troublesome details." The explanation was accepted in good faith by the unsuspicious gentleman to whom it was made. A slight uneasiness excited by his daughter's changed appearance was just as easily explained away by his wife: "Kate is looking badly—of course we must expect that—but she has an excellent constitution. I have no fears about her; the only trouble is, she is rather inclined to be despondent, but that is a mere physical trouble. When the house is full of young people you will

see an improvement." And Kate verified the prediction. The proud girl hid her wound from the world.

The two conditions made to ensure Kate's return to Oakhill had been faithfully observed by Captain Hartley and his sister. The occupants of the little cottage hidden in the wood beyond the latticed gate had left the neighborhood of Oakhill; and Captain Hartley did not return until late in the fall, after all the guests, except Judge and Mrs. Cartaret, were gone. They stayed to welcome the expected heir.

In the last days of November the heir had come and gone, happy in that early release, in that escape from the torture of living a life which had been poisoned in its beginning. The blight never unfolded; it was only disclosed in the falling of the bud. A chain of evil that might have warped souls for a century—"unto the third and fourth generation"—was broken in the welding.

For a few hours a quivering little frame had lain beside an anguished mother, who clung stubbornly to that frail tenement of a human soul. "Born with an affection of the heart" was the interpretation of science.

The faint sound of quick breathing, the throbbing of a heart that fluttered like an imprisoned bird, a waxen baby-face and half-opened violet eyes, were the memories gathered by the young mother before she sank into insensibility; and the dead child was taken from her breast—was mercifully let sleep.

CHAPTER X.

"And the Future with the Past is set at variance;
And Life falters with the burdens which it has."

ON the morning of Mrs. Hartley's first appearance in the breakfast-room after her illness, her father's congratulations upon her recovery were quickly followed by the announcement of his purpose to leave Oakhill on the next day.

In the manner of the announcement there was more of hesitation than of regret—scarcely an appearance of sadness, but a visible effort not to give offence in the telling. Even to Judge Cartaret, unsuspicious as he was, it was evident that there was a hidden skeleton in the house. During her illness his daughter had not always been able to hide the shuddering repulsion she felt for her husband.

The judge's mind worked slowly, but he had one very judicial faculty—clearness in the summing up of evidence. Without being altogether

conscious, in the beginning, of the mental process involved, he had been collecting and collating facts ever since his coming to Oakhill. All of his wife's diplomatic skill had failed to blind him. His liking for Captain Hartley had been, from the first moment of their meeting, more a thing of courtesy to his wife than of reality; and, as the proverb puts it pithily, the more he saw of him the less he liked him. In fact, there was a rapidly growing dislike, which of itself was a thing of terror to an amiable conventionalist.

In the thick of doubts the only positive impression made upon Judge Cartaret's mind was fear of the result if he should stay longer at Oakhill. If Kate continued to follow him with that pitiful, wistful look of entreaty; if her eyes, so like her mother's, pursued him from room to room, he knew he must yield to their dumb pleading. He loved his daughter dearly; but, unhappily, he loved the world's good opinion as well. Every fault of his character grew out of, or was in some way allied to, this conventional cowardice. His very virtues were so tainted by it, were so cramped and distorted, that they had in a measure become passive vices. He tried hard to comfort

himself with the thought that Kate's marriage was not of his advising, that he had been overpersuaded by his wife—by Kate herself. Then conscience struck home, reminding him of his daughter's youth, of her ignorant innocence; telling him that he had known of weighty reasons for objection, which he had only to tell and the telling would have ensured her ready obedience. He was compelled to admit to himself, in this court of equity where he was trying himself, that the dollars of the millionaire had outweighed evidence.

When his false judgment became clearly apparent to him, and he saw how it had wrought his daughter's unhappiness, conscience reminded him of another decision he had made when the lack of money had caused him to give judgment against an honorable gentleman and gallant soldier. He had used all the power his cousin's will had given him to prevent the marriage of his cousin's daughter, Margaret, to Leszinksky. He had stretched his authority to the utmost verge. And although his ward had waited dutifully until she was legally of age before marrying without his consent, he had made the trials of her life heavier by keeping from her

every dollar the law let him retain. Even now since her death he had made no allowance to her child from the money he was yearly adding to the great Cartaret estate. To do Judge Cartaret full justice, I think he would have been glad to make bountiful provision for Margaret's child, Rue, if Major Leszinksky had only asked him. But just then the great fault in his character that I have mentioned blinded his sense of justice. Or, to define it more exactly, it poisoned his sense of right. He would do nothing in the present which implied an admission of wrong in the past. He would not give voluntarily to Margaret's child what he had withheld from Margaret herself. He resented Leszinksky's self-respectful independence, calling it in his thoughts "the stubborn folly of a fool."

But underlying his thoughts, troubling his selfish attempt at self-justification, there was a sub-consciousness of wrong that, through failure of repentance, embittered Judge Cartaret against the Leszinkskys. He wished that some need, some misfortune would force the proud soldier to ask for assistance. Then—his vanity sweetened the fancy—how generous he would be! He felt a glow of delight at the mere thought

of his own praiseworthy benevolence. He knew it would reap an abundant harvest—win him "golden opinions from all sorts of men."

All Virginia knew the value of the great Cartaret estate; knew the provisions of Colonel Cartaret's will, and that the estate would revert to Judge Cartaret's own son if one young life should go out. Why, all Virginia would ring with the story of Judge Cartaret's disinterestedness should he settle the Leszinkskys at "the Cedars." And he would do it—if Leszinksky would only give him occasion. But the world must know it was a charity, not a tardy amend. He would be generous, but generosity must justify him—must brilliantly illuminate the probity of his guardianship.

Kate's troubles had brought about this settlement with conscience by contingent promises, but Kate herself clouded her father's beatific vision of his apotheosis. Her suffering was not one of the peculiar varieties of suffering the world tolerates.

That particular portion of earth which, with its inhabitants, constituted the world to Judge Cartaret was sternly intolerant if a woman made any outcry of discontent, any sound to shock

the ears of the neophytes who wait in the porch of the temple of marriage.

It had from the earliest colonial days been a matter of pride and self-laudation to more than one of the Southern States that divorces were unknown in their courts of justice.

The law of marriage was a Median law—not to be broken. I do not know that it was "so nominated in the bond," but it was universally understood that the disgrace and obloquy of its fracture, if fractured, would reflect upon the woman. I do not assert that men were more virtuous or more manly through this prophetically vicarious suffering of women, but it certainly had a strengthening effect upon the warned and weaker sex. They learned to bear their burdens and make no sign. The martyrs were the leaven that leavened their sex with the purest courage —endurance.

With an equally decorous chance for widowhood, I doubt if they would have been as devoted as Alcestis; but I am sure a Southern woman would have thought it more proper to have stayed in Hades than to have returned thence with Hercules.

This conventionality was intensified by the

narrowness of its channel. The remoteness from the reactive ebb and flood of metropolitan thought made small things appear great.

Yet there was a certain dignity and stateliness in the old plantation life that gave it rare flavor. The gentry were all akin, and there was but little censorious speech; but they owed certain debts to their order, and such debts were the only ones that were frequently mentioned and never remitted.

Noblesse oblige was reason for a duel, and reason for a woman to suffer mutely. These unwritten laws caused terrible suffering, but there was less scandal.

If a woman died of her torture there was a comforting tombstone that catalogued her virtues and epitomized the grief of the bereaved widower.

If two hot-brained young springalds glanced down the steely-blue barrels of duelling-pistols in the early dawn, and one was left motionless on the cool, dewy greensward, why,

> "The palpitating fever
> Cooled at once by that blood-let."

One had paid the fool's debt of honor, and the other was an "honorable man," who henceforth

proudly bore the mark of Cain. What matter if some trembling woman, sweetheart, wife, or childless mother, started aghast at the sight?

A society with such customs and of such components was the tribunal Judge Cartaret dared not face with a married and husbandless, though unwidowed, daughter upon his arm. He knew what such championship would cost. There was his son—only too ready a shot. And the girl herself, pure, innocent, and blameless, as he knew her to be—her very youth and beauty would condemn her to the shelter of seclusion. How could such a child stand against the sentiment of her own sex when the blood of the martyrs who had suffered and submitted to suffering should cry out against her? Then his cheek burnt with wrath at the thought of the men who would warmly or coldly look their pity. No! she must bide under the shelter of her husband's roof with the sad company of her lost love-dreams. For his son's sake, for her sake, he dare not assist her to freedom from this most horrible slavery, this serfdom of the soul, that suffers through the senses.

I do not wish to do Judge Cartaret the slightest injustice. (We were friends and neighbors in

the old golden days before the flood; when the carpet-bagger had not yet squeezed the fatness from the land; before the siren song of the Readjuster had stolen the hearts of the Stalwarts; when dollars were in my pocket and duns were an unknown entity; when gentlemen were gentlemen, and there seemed no more probability of my being "one of them blanked literary fellows" than that the utterer of that aphorism should grow to such greatness that he hath made pigmies of us all.) I repeat that I am reluctant to condemn my old friend. I am willing to believe that he did not know quite what a scoundrel his daughter had married. Hartley had governed himself, had kept an appearance of courtesy, almost of devotion, to his wife, and Mrs. Cartaret had labored to screen any chance omission.

One thing the judge did know (I am sorry to have to admit how much of that "rascally virtue, prudence," he possessed in common with another time-serving Virginian)—he knew his daughter's wretchedness. It pained him to see her suffer; but because the world was his god he could not snatch her from under its car. More selfish, or less courageous, than the

fanatical Hindoo, he could leave her to the fate whose blow he dared not witness, and from which he dared not save her.

Unfortunately for Judge Cartaret's peace of mind, he was forced into the one thing he had most earnestly striven to avoid, which was an explanation with his daughter.

When he announced his intention to leave Oakhill Captain Hartley hospitably urged his stay, "at least until after the holidays were past."

Kate said not a word, but her face grew bright and expectant. Mrs. Cartaret was busy with letters and papers, leaving her husband to find his own excuses for repeated refusal to stay. Embarrassed at the transparency of his own pretexts, and the appeal in Kate's face that he could not wholly understand, Judge Cartaret pleaded letters that must be written, and escaped to his wife's sitting-room, leaving the question of their immediate departure still undetermined.

Mrs. Cartaret crushed her letters impatiently and turned to her brother:

"I wish, Wenner, if you are not particularly engaged, you would look over some of these papers with me. My memoranda do not agree

with the accounts of the executor. It is a point of delicacy with Judge Cartaret not to interfere in my Hilton settlements."

A smile on her face and a very decided sneer on her brother's marked their valuation of the "point of delicacy." Kate rose from her chair, saying to Mrs. Cartaret: "Then you will excuse me. You will find me in my room whenever you are at leisure."

"I will come as soon as we get through with these tiresome papers. You are wise in getting to your snuggery. This is the coldest room in the house. I shall go with Wenner into his den —that is, if the omnipresent Marten is not visible there. Can we go?" addressing her brother.

"Yes. I presume your pet aversion has finished his labor; if not, he will be glad to rest."

He opened the door and bowed ceremoniously to his wife. As she passed slowly up the broad stairway the brother and sister went through the library into the room Kate had never entered since she found there the painting of Hagar.

Through the summer, when the house was full of guests, these "private rooms of Captain Hartley" had remained closed. It was tacitly understood that they were not to be used during his

absence. When he returned, which was late in the fall after the summer visitors were gone, he occupied them. The room next to Kate's, which had been his during his one day's stay at Oakhill immediately after their return from Europe, had been fitted up as a nursery for the expected heir. After the child's death, during Kate's illness, Mrs. Cartaret slept there. So Captain Hartley kept his old quarters in the east wing.

Kate walked back and forth through her dressing-room and bed-chamber. No one was there. Rose had gone, after beating the fires to a dull red, smouldering mass, from beneath which an occasional tongue of flame hissed forth like an angry viper.

The third room of the suite was closed. Kate opened the door. The room prepared for the little guest who would not stay was silent and cold. The childless young mother shuddered in this icy room. The dead child had never entered there; but Death was there. A ghostly presence seemed to clutch at her robe. She stooped over the empty cradle and smoothed the little pillow she had made with loving hands for a baby's head which had never lain upon it, saying softly:

"My baby! my baby! I am thankful you are safe! I wish I were sleeping with you, my baby, lying with your little head pillowed on my heart, out of this pain and wretchedness, this fear of sin that will stain, that is staining, my soul. For, O my baby, my baby! I cannot, cannot love your father. For your sake I have tried, have striven, but I cannot. O my darling! I cannot."

Tears fell on the pillow like great drops from a passing shower—fell, and rolled into the meshes of the dainty lace, freezing where no baby head would ever melt their ice.

CHAPTER XI.

"Nay! I have done; you get no more of me;
And I am glad—yea, glad with all my heart,
That thus so clearly I myself can free."

JUDGE CARTARET, in a happy state of self-gratulation, worked away at his letters. He had made the first move toward departure successfully. He felt almost sure there would be no scene, no ill-bred outbreak, no disgraceful airing of domestic unpleasantness. There would be nothing tangible to take with him which would keep him awake o' nights; nothing that would worry him to remember except —well, yes, there were exceptions.

He said to himself: "I wish Kate had more self-control. People should hide their worries and their antipathies. I am sure I hide mine. It's confoundedly unpleasant to have a woman's eyes follow me as hers do, and so like her mother's they are. Hartley is a brute; but Kate had her own way in the marriage. Now she must con-

sider other people. One's own suffering is not everything. We all have to make sacrifices. I'm sure I do. And there is Tom to consider. If I were to take Kate home Tom would soon know what I would rather not know, and he would shoot Hartley on sight. Serve him right, too—the scornful, sneering scoundrel! I would like to knock him down myself, and would if it was not for the scandal and the unpleasantness that would come of it. Julia's brother and my daughter's husband—it's an abominable mess; but Kate—"

Hearing the door open, he looked up, and Nemesis stood before him in the form of his daughter. All of his fears gathered about him, and instinctively he tried to ward off trouble.

"You are looking tired, Kate." He stood up and pushed back the chair. She should not take him at a disadvantage. If he could help it she should not complain of her husband. He must prevent it; he already knew too much. He would not listen. If he did he would be compelled to a course of conduct that was at variance with all his ideas of decorum, of propriety; and with him those two words had very large meaning. He nervously handled his letters and pa-

pers, still standing as he talked on in broken, disconnected sentences.

"You are not strong yet; and you are sitting up too long. You know you must not overtask your strength this first day you are with us, Kate. Better go and lie down an hour or two before luncheon. The snow is whirling in drifts. The wind is rising and these halls are draughty. This is the exposed side of the house. Your room is sheltered from the storm. I will send Julia to you at once. I would go with you, but these letters must be off to-day."

"I must speak with you, papa."

"Very well, we will have a cosey talk this afternoon. But just now—you know, Kate, I hate letters, and if I am interrupted they suffer."

With a childlike gesture of appeal she put out her hand.

"I suffer, papa—I suffer so cruelly I can no longer endure this life I am compelled to lead. If you go without hearing me I know I shall be driven to something desperate. Will you help me, papa? Will you listen?"

Through her father's fears she had won a hearing. The "something desperate" was an *argumentum ad hominem*. The judge would

listen to all she wished to say, if by his listening the world might not hear.

"If it is really important, my daughter, why the letters must wait."

"They will have to wait, papa." It was said softly, with a pitiful effort to smile; but tears were gathering in the dark eyes and the lips trembled like the lips of a grieved child. The judge caught at the change in her manner—he was ready to catch at straws.

"Unless it is something you can say to Julia. She will be here in a moment; she is very fond of you, Kate, and very discreet."

"No, papa; you can tell Julia. She arranged with Captain Hartley the terms upon which I have stayed at Oakhill this summer—until my baby was born. She does not know that I have now decided to leave here."

The straws were all broken and the judge in deep water. Without another word he followed Kate to her room.

A gallant of the court in the days of Louis Quatorze who, when banqueting with the king, was suddenly arrested and hurried to the Bastile could not have been more astounded at the rattle of fetters and the clang of dungeon fastenings

than was Judge Cartaret when his daughter locked the door of her dressing-room and sat down beside him.

For a little time—one of those short spaces in which the Fates twist the thread they are spinning—there was no sound save occasional sighing gusts of the wind and sinister hisses of the tongues of flame which crept through the bars of the grate.

Kate's voice broke the silence, startling her father with its intensity :

"I have never loved Captain Hartley, papa—never as a wife should love. I must leave here at once, for I am learning to hate him. Yes, I know it is a terrible thing to say ; but, papa, it is a hundredfold worse to feel nothing but scorn and hatred for the father of my dead baby." Again the sensitive lips quivered, but with resolute effort the low, sweet voice steadied as she continued :

"I have tried to see what was right, to do what was right. In the beginning I tried my very best, papa. Do not think it is altogether my fault. I did not know just what marriage meant. I did not think it could be such a curse, that it could make one so wretched. I was so young

when I left you, papa; and you had been so kind, so indulgent. Life seemed such a bright, such a glad thing. I knew no evil in it; I could not believe or understand Tom's warning. It seemed to me but simple justice to give love for love. I thought it ungenerous to receive without giving; and Julia was so kind, and her brother—well, I had not learned what untruths were lived in the world. I thought my hesitation pained Julia and grieved her brother. Then I promised to marry him if you consented."

That was the very stab her father had feared—"if you consented"; and the girl was so evidently innocent of intention to wound. It was as if a child, playing with the spear of Ithuriel, had unconsciously touched him and pierced through the gauds of the world and the shell of self. The history of Hartley's past, which his son had so passionately pleaded against his acceptance of the rich suitor, seemed to picture itself in the smouldering fire and the tongues of flame. He could only dumbly listen to the voice of the victim he had given to Erinnys.

"I do not think you were quite willing, papa, but you thought it was for my happiness. You

were always indulgent to me, generous, and loving. O papa! how could I think any one would ever be unkind or cruel to me? I knew Tom did not like Captain Hartley. I thought he was prejudiced, that his opposition was the result of his dislike; but Tom, with his fiery temper, never said a harsh word to me in all my life. Papa, should I have expected less from a husband than from a brother?"

He was compelled to speak:

"Certainly not; but this fellow is not a gentleman."

The words came through half-shut teeth, as if they forced themselves into speech.

"No, papa, he is not a gentleman; that is the horror of it. I told him so when he cursed me—he proved it by a blow."

"Cursed you? struck you? My God! did he strike you?"

The indignant father caught his child to his heart. Nature had torn away the last shred of conventionalism. He was no longer the mere courtly gentleman considering the quarterings of his blazon. He was a Man, outraged through this insult to a woman dependent on his protection. The girl, with her arms about his neck,

weeping upon his breast, felt the sobs that shook him like a tempest.

"Papa! papa! it is worse than my own pain to see you so grieved. Papa, he never struck me but once. I would not listen to any apology from him. But Julia begged me for your sake, for my baby's sake, not to tell you, not to wait in New York, but to come here with her. He was to leave Oakhill. She promised he would not return here until all our visitors were gone. He did go to New Mexico; he did not return until his sister wrote him to come. She said he must be here when—when my baby came, or else you would know of our separation. I hoped to be able to forgive him for his child's sake. But my baby was the only hope of that. Now all our ties are broken. If it had lived—and he did send the woman away; she was gone that day—the day I came back with Julia. The day before you left New York he sent her away."

In a choked voice he asked:

"What woman?"

"The mother of that beautiful child—his child. It was near her cottage, in the shrubbery beyond the latticed gate, that he found me—that he struck me."

Holding his daughter as if to shield her, kissing her hair and forehead and tearful eyes, Judge Cartaret said:

"Bathe your face, my daughter; I will send Rose to get you some wine. Tell her to pack up the things you will need. I shall take you with me at once to New York. I cannot settle with that scoundrel in his own house. But can you go, Kate? Are you well enough to go out in this storm? I cannot risk your health, my child; and I do not like to leave you another day in this house."

"Yes, I can go, papa. I can bear anything but to stay here—alone with him. But you, papa? For Julia's sake, for my dead baby's sake, you will not—"

"Be calm, my child. I cannot fight the cowardly brute, much as I wish it. But Tom is not so fettered."

"Papa! O papa! Tom must not know."

There was a quick knocking at the door.

"Rose!"

"No, it is not Rose. It is I—Julia. Is your father there, Kate?"

"Yes."

"I must see him immediately. Tell him to

come to my room. There is a messenger here from Belleview."

They heard her walk away.

"Please go, papa. You can tell Julia I am going with you. And say, papa, with my love, that I had rather not see her before we go. Unless, papa—do you wish her to go with us?"

"No; she is not ready. Rose can finish your packing and come with Julia to-morrow. Dress very warmly, my daughter. We shall have to drive to New York. There is no train until late this afternoon."

"Yes, papa."

In the hall Captain Hartley was waiting for Judge Cartaret. He held out a letter, saying:

"Judge, you had better come to the library to read this letter. The messenger who brought it is there."

Without a word or gesture to show his knowledge of Hartley's presence, Judge Cartaret started down the stairway, when he met Rose coming up. She had a scared, ashen face.

"Rose, where is Sandy?"

"In the kitchen, marster."

"Tell him to go to Yonkers and get the best horses they have in the livery-stable and a close,

comfortable carriage. I shall drive to New York, and he must come with the carriage at once. Do you understand? At once."

"Yes, marster."

CHAPTER XII.

"What is he but a brute
Whose flesh hath soul to suit?"

THE Hilton papers were soon disposed of by Mrs. Cartaret and Captain Hartley, and Mrs. Cartaret's real subject of discussion in the interview she had asked for was reached in this question:

"Have you had any explanation with Kate? Have you arranged anything for the future, Wenner? It will not do to leave things as they are, to trust to her having forgiven your offence."

"I thought you were the treaty-maker. I have done nothing, except to observe very faithfully the conditions she made. I have neither spoken to her nor have I seen her except in her father's presence or yours. That was the condition to be observed on my return here. The banishment of Lucy was instantaneous. It was accomplished the day she ordered it. There was

nothing more required—at least I so understood. If there is a hitch the error is in your diplomacy. Was it only an armed truce you arranged?"

"It is an armed truce. Your phrase very correctly defines it. Kate made conditions which you accepted to secure her stay here—her silence. But her promises were limited. They ended with the birth of her child. Since its death I do not know what she may do, what she has decided. It needed all the diplomacy you so sneeringly mention to persuade her to return to Oakhill; to leave New York that morning without seeing her father; to keep silent when he came here. Now, if further 'diplomacy' is needed you must be your own ambassador."

Hartley was standing by the open wood fire. A burning log broke and rolled against the fender. He violently kicked it in place, sending after it a volley of fierce oaths.

"Wenner!"

"What more have you to say?" With spiteful rage he threw this question at his sister.

"You are such a brute that for Kate's own sake I shall be glad if she does come to Belleview. You need not practise that basilisk glare. I am not your wife; you dare not strike me! If you

do not govern your language and your temper I will neither listen to you nor try to excuse you to Kate or her father when she tells him the story of her life with you."

"Curse them all! I hate the breed." Looking at his sister, he was discreet enough to stop there. The expression in her face warned him to be cautious. He clenched his long, white teeth beneath the parted lips, that gave a wolfish expression to the narrow, pale face which was fringed with dark red whiskers, and waited with what patience he could muster for the thrust he knew was coming.

"It was as much cowardly fear of the Cartaret gentlemen as anxiety to preserve the position your connection with the Cartarets gave you that made you so humble in apology last summer. You knew you had passed bounds which it was not safe to pass. The pride that helped Kate to conceal her suffering, to bear neglect and the petty tortures of her daily life, had driven her to desperation. You did not care to face a settlement with the Cartarets. For some reason I was once almost silly enough to believe it a sentiment of natural affection, and that you wished to preserve the life of Kate's child.

Possibly you have the instinct of parental love. Your self-love may include your children in its narrow circle. I remember you seemed really fond of that woman's child—that poor 'Hagar' you sent away."

It had been a fierce struggle, but he had mastered his temper when at white heat. He remembered that he could not perfect his plans for the future without his sister's assistance. He believed he could win her assistance. Although she knew him thoroughly and frequently failed to withhold frank, contemptuous expression of that knowledge, he was sure that at heart she loved him loyally. Had she not loved him he would have had more respect for her; it was a weakness, something to be counted when he reckoned up his chances, so he gave neither respect nor love for love. But just then he needed her help; and words are cheap tempters. "Forgive me, Julia. You know I have not over-much patience, and you see with what contempt that girl regards me. You talk of the sacrifice of her pride. Do you think it has cost me nothing to come to Oakhill and live here through the last six weeks—six weeks given to the stubborn, silent fool and that old idiot, her father?"

"You are speaking of your wife and of my husband; that last I insist you shall remember."

"I cannot well forget the double relationship. But I do not think you need take offence at what I say. Neither of us has wholly neglected opportunities. You made one love-match which taught you how dearly love could cost—"

"Do not speak of that—you shall not!"

"I intend to say nothing which is disagreeable, but I am summing up facts; once for all let us count them fairly. When you met Judge Cartaret you were a beautiful widow with luxurious tastes and no resources. Your patrimony, never much, had been spent. Your life here with old Simon Hartley was one of bitter dependence; his housekeeper, the unacknowledged daughter of our father, had a better position than yours in the old miser's household. And your position was likely to be more unbearable when his son returned from Europe with the wife who had taken the husband you refused in your romantic girlish days. You did the very best thing possible when you married Judge Cartaret. You were wiser than I dared hope you would be. You see you have a tendency to the infeasible, the impracticable—just a touch

upon the brain, a weak place somewhere, a leaning to romantic vagaries. But the old man here taught you the value of wealth and the bitterness of dependence. I do not wonder you esteem the Carterets highly. What a contrast it must have been!—the princely hospitality, the elegant courtesy of those Virginians; after two years of black bread salted with allusion to the husband who left you penniless."

"I tell you, Wenner, you shall not speak of him."

"I will not again offend. Your faithfulness does you credit. I wonder where you came by that quality? It does not run in the Hartley blood, except in the channel of self. It is your vagary alone. I do not suppose you ever would have married again if that ship had gone down, with the old miser's progeny aboard, four months earlier, and had been hard followed, as it was later, by old Simon's death. But it is better that you did marry again. You have position as well as wealth. Why, when I came into old Simon's savings I married for like reasons."

"But Kate had no fortune."

"You will forget 'the great Cartaret estate'—that semi-royal residence, 'the Cedars,'—I think

I shall prefer it to Oakhill; and pray remember the almost numberless investments of growing capital made by your husband. Now I shall flatter you through him." They both smiled (her anger was gone, his was hidden) as he continued: "Judge Cartaret's management of Mrs. Leszinksky's inheritance has been simply admirable. Her heirs are much indebted to him"—indicating himself by touch as one of the grateful throng, he bowed mockingly.

"But what possible chance has Kate to inherit the Cedars? There is Mrs. Leszinksky's child. I have never heard that Rue is at all delicate. Then before Kate—and even her interest you do not seem likely to secure—there is Tom Cartaret. You do not know the last news from Tom. It is not to be publicly told before Christmas. I thought you were the reason he would not come here this summer; but it seems he stayed at Buffalo Springs, and lingered through the hunting season this fall in Mecklenburg to some purpose. He is engaged to Mildred Hamner. Kate has not the shadow of a chance to own the 'Cedars.'"

"No matter how shadowy the chance. It is one I have heavily backed. I have staked old

Simon Hartley's estate and my handsome person on that glimmering shadow, and I expect to win. So Tom is hunting in Mecklenburg?"

The long, white teeth were fully shown as Hartley's clear, mocking laugh rang out. There was a half-fearful, curious look in Mrs. Cartaret's eyes.

"What can you mean, Wenner?"

"Why, luck to the Mecklenburg hunt. The hunters will sigh in vain for the brush of a fox. Tom will take them all. He is a plucky rider and will gallantly lead. Not a brush will he fail to lay at his sweetheart's feet, if he is only well mounted."

"He has with him the best-bred horse in 'the Cedars'' stables and that English hunter you sent over." Suddenly Mrs. Cartaret paled visibly. Again her brother laughed. There was a short silence, then she spoke; her words showed where her thoughts had strayed. "If you care for any one in the world, Wenner, it is that beautiful child of Lucy's. Had she been humpbacked or plain I suppose you would have detested her. But being an idealized likeness of yourself, your vanity has won her a certain place in your affection. I do not believe that affection would out-

live a case of confluent smallpox or a bad disfigurement, but it will exist while she pleases your sense of beauty."

"She is a beautiful child, and I am fond of her, although I have long wanted to get rid of her mother. It was the merest bosh for Kate to be in such a rage that day. I would have shipped Lucy long ago but for the child. And she was not in the house here. I never did quite know how Kate found her way to the cottage that morning. I was there to tell Lucy of a change I wished made. In some way this charming half-sister of ours, this hereditary housekeeper planted by old Simon's will at Oakhill, had taken Lucy under her sheltering wing—a fellow-feeling, I presume, among these daughters of nobody—so it was difficult to arrange Lucy's separation from the child. And I wanted Mai away from her. Lucy is unmistakably a quadroon. Any negro-trader could tell the taint in her blood. But Mai is pure to sight as a lily—much fairer than that little wild-cat of Leszinksky's."

Something in the comparison or in a memory made Hartley's face darken. He was looking out at the fast-flying, driving snow. His sister

sat watching him, thinking of Kate and the chance of a reconciliation, when some one knocked at the door leading to the library—the door of the curtained recess. At Hartley's bidding the door opened and Marten came in announcing an arrival:

"Mr. Richard Freeman is here, sir; he drove out from New York. He left Belleview yesterday. There is very bad news, sir, for Judge Cartaret."

"What is it, do you know?"

"Mr. Tom Cartaret is dead, sir."

"Are you sure?"

Mrs. Cartaret trembled violently. Her brother repeated the inquiry in an expectant, hushed tone.

"Yes, sir. I saw Mr. Richard myself. He sent for me to come out. He wanted you to be told first, so you could break the news to Judge Cartaret. He brought a letter for him from Doctor Cabell. But the doctor cautioned him not to deliver it until the judge was prepared."

"Do you know when Tom died?"

"Three days ago, sir. He was out hunting in Mecklenburg. The English horse he was riding refused to take a fence. Mr. Tom sent him

at it, and he reared and swerved. Mr. Tom was on the ground when the horse struck him and killed him. Mr. Richard was with him; he saw the horse kill him. He says the brute was so vicious he seemed gone mad."

"God have mercy! It is too horrible!" moaned Mrs. Cartaret. Hartley's face was livid in its pallor. With a quick glance at his sister he asked:

"Where is Richard Freeman?"

"In the dining-room, sir. He gave me this letter of Doctor Cabell's for you."

"Tell him I will see him soon. He must come to the library and see Judge Cartaret as soon as the judge comes down." As Marten left the room Hartley said to his sister:

"Julia! command yourself. You must exert all your self-control. It will be best for you to see Judge Cartaret and tell him there is a messenger here from Belleview. Tell him nothing more. I will wait in the hall and bring him down to the library to see Richard. You must be careful not to alarm Kate. The doctor must be here before she is told. I will try to break the news to her father."

Mrs. Cartaret shuddered as her brother touch-

ed her shoulder; she shrank from his hand and turned to leave the room. He followed his sister up the stairway, first telling Marten, who was waiting in the hall, to take Richard Freeman to the library, and then keep the servants away and the house quiet. Mrs. Cartaret came out of her room; meeting her brother in the doorway, she exclaimed in a frightened, anguished tone:

"My husband is not here. I think he is with Kate. I cannot go to them. I will wait here for him."

"Julia, you must go."

He took her hand and forced her into her room, shutting the door after him. She struggled to get free. Holding her firmly, he continued:

"You are absurd in your terror. Are you so stupid that you think me responsible for this accident?"

"You bought that horse. Did you know he was vicious?"

"Yes; and wrote Tom that at times he was unmanageable."

At some length he explained the orders he had had from Tom about the purchase of a hunter,

and why he had bought this one. "It was thoroughbred, of splendid action, and up to Tom's weight; cheap because difficult to manage. But Tom, knowing all, wrote to buy it." Mrs. Cartaret listened while bathing her face and waiting for her husband. At last Hartley persuaded her to go to Kate's room. She called Judge Cartaret and then went back, leaving the rest to her brother. I have told how the judge met Hartley. As he came up the stairway, after sending Rose with the message to his servant, the judge saw Hartley on the landing. Without a word, as Judge Cartaret passed, Hartley again offered Doctor Cabell's letter. Without a word the judge took it; he opened it, glanced down the page, and, turning, raised his clenched fist to strike Hartley, shouting, "You—" The shout died in his throat as he fell heavily on the floor. It was the last effort of the outraged father. The double shock had killed him.

BOOK SECOND.

PLEXUS.

"'Who was it blundered'? eh?
It is not mine to say.
But I, if breath hold out, will tell you what I saw."

PART FIRST. 1856.

IN THE GATEWAY OF WAR.

CHAPTER XIII.

" 'Tis sad to hack into the roots of things,
They are so much intertwisted with the earth."

IN this act of the drama which I am writing the scene opens at the Burnet House in Cincinnati. The time was that particular week in June, 1856, when President-makers were crowding the hotels of the little inland city.

At that date Cincinnati was the commercial centre of the territory which Virginia had given to the federal government. The decline of the fur-trade of St. Louis had scattered her energetic and ambitious capitalists to distant points in New Mexico and along the Pacific coast. Louisville, with the great natural advantage of her position at the falls of the Ohio, had not then conquered the minor difficulties of the situation. Chicago, a swampy, spreading town, just beginning to overlap the barriers of prairie mud, although slowly gaining strength for that struggle with obstruction which has securely

seated her upon a throne of converging railways, was apparently belated in the race for supremacy in the Northwest. During this pause in the growth of her river rivals, and without jealousy of the lakeside town, Cincinnati had pushed steadily on in the road to wealth.

In the first decades of the State's existence Ohio was intersected with a network of commercial arteries—turnpikes that were paying dividends which enriched stockholders, and canals which were fed by rivers that watered and drained a fertile soil.*

The development of the natural wealth of the State so changed the character and condition of the inhabitants that it defeated one object of the creators of the State. In the transfer of her Northwest territory Virginia had dismembered herself to relieve the vast extent of her unsettled lands from the incubus of slavery. It needed less than a century to prove the futility of the gift as an aid to freedom. The Democratic emancipationists of the "Old Dominion" believed that the creation of free States upon the Ohio River would hedge the growth and finally extir-

* These canals soon attracted the greed of politicians, who made a very profitable "ring" of the Canal Board.

pate the evil that had been fastened upon the commonwealth in colonial days. Dominated by that belief, they set apart the Northwest territory as a refuge and a future home for free labor, which, it was hoped, would react upon the domestic institutions of the State and make practicable some plan of gradual emancipation wisely framed to benefit the newly-created freedmen without ruining the future of the emancipators. Such a hope seemed natural and reasonable to a people who had received as a cardinal point in the doctrine of human rights the grand sophism in the opening sentence of the Declaration of Independence. Their intention was excellent. But in fact the creation of this intended stronghold for a poor and pure democracy served only to develop and establish an autocratic slave-power in the Southwest, altogether different in temper and spirit from the mild and clannish serfdom which domestic servitude had become in Virginia.* The sentiment of the South Atlantic States in the latter part of the last and the earlier part of this century was largely in favor of

* With cause and effect before us it is easy to see that if Virginia had held her territory its settlement would have been less rapid and slavery would have been abolished through gradual change in the condition of the slave.

emancipation for practical as well as philanthropic reasons.* Henry Clay's well-known views on the question of emancipation were reflex ideas prevalent in his youth in the State in which he was born.

Such sentiments were spreading and were beginning to find favor. Louisiana had greatly modified her laws of servitude. The shackles of the slave were loosening, and would have speedily fallen of themselves had not the transfer of the Northwest territory to the federal government forced the removal of the Indians from the Gulf States and the Mississippi Valley, that cotton might be grown to enrich the trader, who furnished food to feed the laborers. Thus the extension of slavery was made practicable as well as profitable. The greed of the trader, of the speculator, infected the planter; the burning lust of wealth had but touched him, and his philanthropy shrivelled at the touch.

Through wasteful methods the uplands in the South Atlantic States had become worn out and comparatively useless. Tobacco had exhausted

* The Virginians who carried human chattels to Kentucky found such property unprofitable. Frontier risks for breakage and loss were too costly.

the soil of Virginia (except strips of "low grounds" on the borders of water-courses and exceptional fields of "new grounds" reclaimed from the forests that had grown up upon the waste lands). Under these conditions slavery was not only unprofitable but it was becoming burdensome; worn-out lands were demonstrating the expensiveness of slave-labor.

There were abundant and forcible economic reasons for emancipation, when suddenly the opening of a Northwestern granary which could feed the cultivators of a staple that insured wealth wrought a revolution in the situation.

Northwestern prosperity was generated in the Southwest. There were countless acres in the Mississippi Valley adapted to the growth of cotton, and their settlement would more than double the value of the slave. That these acres belonged to the Indian tribes was but a trifling difficulty—a mere matter of temporary obstruction; the Indian must go! * Choctaws, Chickasaws, Seminoles, and Creeks † were forcibly removed to the Indian Territory and settled upon

* In all the economic transactions of the United States Department of the Interior it has been necessary to remove the Indian.

† A slave-catching contingent of Creeks were left in Georgia.

lands now given to them "in perpetuity" * by a fresh but equally elastic treaty.

The removal of the Indian tribes opened a great market, and a highway of traffic to it, for the rapidly-increasing surplus of Northwestern produce, and transformed simple agriculturists into grasping traders. The very fluctuation of profit increased the attraction. The rage for speculation which succeeds and co-exists with those more simple and open forms of gambling which follow the pioneer westward induced each little settlement to adventure its surplus. Frontiersmen were no longer content with the homely comforts or modest profits of frontier farming. Flatboats were launched from every settlement on the Ohio and its northern tributaries to trade with the equally adventurous planter who took quick possession of the "vacated lands." Steamboats increased and extended this intersectional trade—a trade that founded and fostered the material prosperity of Ohio. Cincinnati †

* In the dictionary of white treaty-makers "in perpetuity" means until the Indian reservations develop either agricultural or mineral value—in short, until they are desirable to white settlers.

† The meat-pedlars, bakers, and well-to-do butchers of her village and town days, incipient millionaires, were soon covering Mill Creek Bottom with cattle-sheds, mills, and slaughter-houses. Year after year there were steady and large accessions to the ever-active army of mill-owners and

led the State in this race for wealth, and drew her profit from the labor of the slave upon the land of the Indian.* The settlement of the vacated lands upon the Mississippi soon proved that a staple could be as powerful a factor in politics as in commerce. It was a fact of which the world had long been dimly cognizant. The feuds in the Democratic party and the disruption of the old conservative Whig party, by one according and the other refusing consent to the exactions of the cotton States, made the power of the new factor apparent to the merest tyro in state-craft.†

One fact universally patent was that the staple was royally enriching the planters of the South and their providers and factors in the North.

pork-packers, who were feeding the negroes on the cotton and sugar plantations of the Mississippi Valley and the Gulf coast. The guild of distillers on the banks of the "Big" and "Little Miami" was no less active in sending southwest the fiery juice of the yellow maize, until every landing on the Arkansas and the Mississippi, at high and low water, was flooded with "Dean's Best" and other less pretentious but no less dangerous brands.

* The commercial spirit that brought the negro from Africa and drew its profit from slave-ships, that made the negro-trader a possibility and a power in the Southwest, built the cities of the Northwest, as it had the factories of New England, upon the profit of slave-labor.

† It had such an effect upon the surface-thinkers that they rushed to the other extreme of faith and stupidly believed in the illimitable rule of "King Cotton."

All increased their ventures, that more negroes might be bought to raise cotton and more cotton raised to buy negroes. Thus the freedom of the slave was retarded by the unexampled growth of Virginia's free territory.

The disputes in and out of the Democratic Convention which assembled at Cincinnati in 1856, the vindictive bitterness of rival delegations, the quarrel of the "Hards" and the "Softs," foreshadowed the end of this factitious prosperity.

The cause and its final consequence being part of the force and movement of this drama, the *deus ex machinâ*, it was needful to show that the transfer of the larger portion of the area of Virginia to the federal government, and the consequent removal of the Indian tribes, came near ending the Union which it was intended to strengthen.* It is only fair to say that the sin of slavery does not wholly rest at the door of the South—certainly not upon the lintel of Virginia.

* Fiction is often the most truthful and faithful conservator of history.

CHAPTER XIV.

"The western wind was wild and dark with foam,
And all alone went she."

IN one of a suite of rooms on the first floor of the Burnet House, near the Vine Street entrance, Captain Hartley was seated at a small table by an open window, busily writing. A door of communication with a larger room was slightly ajar. In there a party of delegates to the convention, and some few of their attendant satellites of the lobby, were noisily discussing the chances of the Presidential candidates. They had broken into groups of talkers, and the only silent listeners were the smokers in the windows opening on the balcony which overhung the Vine Street pavement.

There was such a confusion of voices that the writer in the small room could hear nothing distinctly except the repetition of certain names. The constant arrival and departure of carriages and stages that rattled up and down the hill and

around the corners into Third Street increased the medley of sound.

The entrance of a waiter with a fresh supply of "Longworth's Sparkling" and many foaming glasses of "Catawba Cobblers" created a temporary lull in the committee-room until a squad of New York "Hards" contemptuously expressed their disgust with "this weak wine slush," and, putting on the straw hats with which they had been trying to stir the breezeless air, followed a leader who proposed to "go up to the Waverley and see if Rynders has got there. If he has we'll get the fellows and go wake the echoes over the 'Rhine.' I would rather swill beer with the Dutchmen than demoralize my stomach with such stuff as this." With the departure of the disgusted detachment the conversation became more coherent.

First disjointed sentences, and then, as they settled to steady discussion, all the conversation reached Hartley, accented by the popping of corks, the fizzing of wine, and the rattle of ice in the thin, resonant glasses.

"I say, Breckenridge is working for Buchanan —working to push his own interest. He is bitten with—" "We have to face the fact that the

Softs are well organized—" "A set of Missouri Abolitionists gone off on the same craze—" "But the party must be kept out of the row; they are all crazy on color—" "It is simply the beginning of the retrograde movement. The centripetal and centrifugal forces of the nation and the State will do the rest." "The South is no longer safe in the hands of a New-Englander. There is a sinister motive in this bid for our support. It is always the same cry: 'Help me, Cassius, or I sink,' and when Cæsar reaches the shore he kicks Cassius into the water." "As if Slidell could do anything to heal the breach between the split factions! It is the extreme of folly for any self-selected umpire to propose a conference to New York rival delegations. Slidell had better look at home; there is Louisiana divided, and Soulé working furiously for Douglas." "The Bonaparte is proven as clearly in Soulé's combinations as in his face: '*bon sang ne ment pas.*'" "In the convention noise and numbers will go for Old Buck, but brains are against him." "As if brains ever won against such odds!"

"Benton is for Buchanan."

"Then it is clear the brains go the other way.

The Missourian is a man of one idea. With him there is but one question, and I would like to ask that for him: 'What is he to get?' "

"I do not think he knows just what he wants. Somebody asked him if he was coming to the convention; his answer was: 'Yes, sir; yes. Like the wild hog, sir, he can be tolled up to eat corn, sir, but he can't be coaxed into the pen, sir—can't be coaxed.' Those were the exact words of the oracle. Can any priest of his tell what they mean?"

"Why, that he wants the corn, but prefers to pick it up outside the pen."

"You do not understand Benton; he is a great man and a pure patriot." There was a burst of laughter, but the Bentonite continued: "He is abused as an Abolitionist; but hear him. He says: 'I consider a slavery agitation and its natural offspring, sectional agitation, the greatest curse, both socially and politically, which could befall our Union.' Would an Abolitionist have said that?"

"*Dulce, et cætera*—fine words. I wonder where he stole 'em? There is nothing safer in politics than a rhetorical burst. It is effective for the time, and counts for nothing when the moment

for action arrives. Do you think Benton will go with the South should the sovereign States dissolve this federal Union, which Greeley defines as a 'compact with hell,' and which Bob Toombs designates as 'the devil's *bund*' ?"

"Of course he would. Benton is first and last a Missourian, and Missouri is a Southern State with a large slave-holding population."

"O man of much faith! Missouri would then be a border State in reality. The Free-Soil party with which your favorite has affiliated would be a power in Missouri. The North would offer them the State as a bribe, and Benton would stick by the flesh-pots of Egypt. So will our South-loving Illinoisians. I am a Southerner, but I am not blind. I know that when the wind veers the weathercocks turn. In my dictionary I define MAN as 'an animal which consults its own interest by seeking security and safety at the expense of its fellows.' If the cyclone of secession ever strikes the United States we of the South will find in our loving Northwest a nest of malignants. New England is tied to the slave-fields by the fibre of cotton, and the Northwest is enamored of the profit slave-labor pays as yearly tribute. The

possessive case is endearing, but if you change it to the objective and shatter interest you kill affection. North and South are in perfect unity regarding the Indian, because he is unprofitable and in the way; but they are very ready to divide on the negro question whenever interest is divided. The national conscience is a chameleon, which changes its color to suit the crime over which it crawls."

"'Saul among the prophets'—a Virginian calling slavery a crime!"

"So did Jefferson and Randolph. I do not belie my blood or breeding. I respect the extreme Abolitionists who fight for a principle and refuse a compromise. Had I been born among them I should have been of them. As it is, seeing the futility of Abolitionism, I am a Virginian Emancipationist."

"Little credit that will bring you with extremists. Listen to this from the New York *Tribune:* 'Southern insolence keeps pace with Northern pusillanimity.' Then Mr. Greeley hopes that 'the first act of the new *régime* will be to subject to ten years' imprisonment in the penitentiary any one making an assault upon a member of Congress while at Washing-

ton, or going or returning from there.' Then he likens the Federal legislators to the Roman 'Tribunes of the People,' and insists that 'they shall be clothed with an absolute personal inviolability.'"

"I believe the tendency of the Whig party and its fragments is to imperialism; and here is fresh proof that my belief is well grounded: A leader of opinion—and, mark it, a man born of the working-class—advises the creation of a privileged aristocracy. This advice is the forerunner of what is to come, the beginning of the end—the prologue in the tragedy of the Columbian empire. It is accented by the resolution introduced in the Massachusetts Legislature, instructing the adjutant-general of the State to furnish its senators and representatives in Congress with Colt's revolvers. And they do not stop there. These Puritans propose an appropriation to send Sumner a body-guard. In plain words, they would commence a civil war by arming and equipping the patricians and their followers."

"Oh! that Sumner affair [there was a volley of the strong Saxon words which foreigners catch so quickly] has set those fool Carolinians to voting canes to Brooks."

"Yes; hold two bullies apart and the devil couldn't wish them in a better fighting humor. Massachusetts and South Carolina raise quarrels to turn into their neighbors' grounds. They've started a nice brood in New York—"

"The Softs are rotten Abolitionists at heart —" (Here was a Babel of noise and interruption, then more broken phrases.)

"Davis, Cushing, and Pierce have no cohesive attraction. They are explosive forces. The Administration would never have held together without Marcy's iron hand—" "Nonsense! Jefferson Davis is the real President; Pierce is a weak, vacillating—" "The Silver Grays lean that way. The coalition will make a desperate effort to coerce the convention." "Wiggins won't be brow-beaten, but will denounce Pierce. The cohesive power of the public plunder—" "Will attract Ben Butler and his following; he has this advantage over Griswold, that—" "He has no scruples, and he comes with a cohort of rogues and roughs—" "Nice backers for Sickles, Kelley, and Tom Hyer! He may do his level best; and then Pierce and Douglas—" "But Marcy's friends are a solid phalanx—" "A pretty lot of fools.

Marcy has no fixed principle or policy. He is equally ready to recognize Walker or to go in partnership with John Bull. And he daresn't squeak if Americans are shot—"

"But it was Marcy's suggestion—"

"All gammon!—as if the gray-eyed man of destiny would be senator from Nicaragua. Such a supposition is an insult to his future. He is the Napoleon of the coming Central American Confederation, the hope of the creoles of Cuba. Goicouria is pledged to him, and there will be no lack of Anglo-Saxons to back him. He has the sympathy of the United States, and a closer bond—that of interest. We see clearly our advantage in handling the products of Mexican mines, to say nothing of the cotton, sugar, and coffee districts, that promise limitless trade and profit in the future. Why, Walker's success would in the end give us the whole of Mexico. We blundered by not taking every foot of it when we stopped at the Rio Grande. The entire commercial world would be benefited by Anglo-Saxon domination on this continent. Spanish-American hybrids are a failure. Walker's success means social, political, and religious progress; and we'll have devilish

zealous partisan. He vehemently cried out: "Why, this Mosquito business is everything to the Monroe doctrine. That doctrine is, 'The American continents, by the free and independent condition they have assumed and maintained, are henceforth not to be considered subjects for future colonization by any European powers.'"

A half-derisive yet good-natured laugh at the declamatory recitation of the quoted "doctrine," hushed as the drawling falsetto again claimed a hearing:

"Well, my notion is if John Bull wants to meddle with the Muskeeters, why, let him take the chance of being stung. He's thin-skinned and tender, and he'll get enough of it pretty cussed quick. He'll have to hop round lively to come up with Walker; and when he does Walker will be mighty apt to play a lone hand with Johnny. The New Nicaraguaian has a fistful of trumps and a set of backers that won't care a continental damn for the British lion."

There was a rapturous assent to the sentiment of this evident favorite. Then the Marcy advocate began:

"From first to last Marcy has admirably man-

aged the Walker affair. There were complications and contingencies to be considered. Palmerston, an aristocrat by birth, association, and ambition, is the natural enemy of democratic progress. He is making masterly moves in his effort to give England control in the councils of the allied European powers. His opposition to Louis Napoleon's design on Italy is altogether a matter of show, a polite deference to the rival Continental nations. England and France are constantly coming into closer sympathy. We have proof of this in Washington. The French minister is Crampton's friend and confidential adviser. To me it seems evident that the regulations which are harassing American shipping in French ports are due to the Franco-English alliance. If we get into a war with either, the other, if not an active enemy, will be a watchful and cold neutral. The Bonapartes do not forget that the monarchy, not the empire, has- claim to our gratitude; that the best Bourbon Louis was our first friend. We do not forget that in France a Bonaparte is always the heir-at-law of a defunct republic. The first emperor taught us that even in the nineteenth century military conquests are fatal to a republic, that a Cæsar

zealous partisan. He vehemently cried out: "Why, this Mosquito business is everything to the Monroe doctrine. That doctrine is, 'The American continents, by the free and independent condition they have assumed and maintained, are henceforth not to be considered subjects for future colonization by any European powers.' "

A half-derisive yet good-natured laugh at the declamatory recitation of the quoted "doctrine," hushed as the drawling falsetto again claimed a hearing:

"Well, my notion is if John Bull wants to meddle with the Muskeeters, why, let him take the chance of being stung. He's thin-skinned and tender, and he'll get enough of it pretty cussed quick. He'll have to hop round lively to come up with Walker; and when he does Walker will be mighty apt to play a lone hand with Johnny. The New Nicaraguaian has a fistful of trumps and a set of backers that won't care a continental damn for the British lion."

There was a rapturous assent to the sentiment of this evident favorite. Then the Marcy advocate began:

"From first to last Marcy has admirably man-

aged the Walker affair. There were complications and contingencies to be considered. Palmerston, an aristocrat by birth, association, and ambition, is the natural enemy of democratic progress. He is making masterly moves in his effort to give England control in the councils of the allied European powers. His opposition to Louis Napoleon's design on Italy is altogether a matter of show, a polite deference to the rival Continental nations. England and France are constantly coming into closer sympathy. We have proof of this in Washington. The French minister is Crampton's friend and confidential adviser. To me it seems evident that the regulations which are harassing American shipping in French ports are due to the Franco-English alliance. If we get into a war with either, the other, if not an active enemy, will be a watchful and cold neutral. The Bonapartes do not forget that the monarchy, not the empire, has- claim to our gratitude; that the best Bourbon Louis was our first friend. We do not forget that in France a Bonaparte is always the heir-at-law of a defunct republic. The first emperor taught us that even in the nineteenth century military conquests are fatal to a republic, that a Cæsar

may bridge with victories his way to a throne. Louis Napoleon will teach the 'imperial child of France' to distrust even a Western republic; to neglect no occasion to limit its bounds and break its strength. Upon the slightest pretext the emperor would quickly seize the Mexico we so stupidly let go. Mr. Marcy has a difficult problem to solve; but he is doing, colonel, just what you Southerners wish. You cannot expect a diplomatist to settle things with the audacity and rapidity with which an Arkansian cuts his way out of a difficulty?"

The tone expressed a question, and there was a courteous pause for assent. The drawling answer was of itself a slow disclaimer of undue haste.

"Arkansaw diplomacy is a different thing from the civilized article. It don't turn its back on friend or foe. It has learnt one frontier lesson which is worth knowing—that the best way out of a quarrel is never to dodge fighting, and when you do go in be cool but quick. Bowie-knives are good weapons, and mighty reliable at close quarters; but the fellow who has a pair of healthy derringers, and shoots recklessly from his coat-tail pockets without caring for the holes

he makes in the cloth, will lay out his enemy handsomer than a slasher can."

A clear voice, with that distinct enunciation which proves breeding as unmistakably as will the ears and pasterns of a racer, asked:

"Colonel, please tell us something of that fight out in the Indian Territory this spring—the fight where the odds against you were so heavy. I am sure we are all ready to cut politics after a day of constant discussion. This is just the hour for a story like that. It will people the twilight with ghosts."

"Well, we made ghosts of some of them sneaks, and I've been sorry ever since we didn't get the balance. I will tell you of that fight, Charley; for it proves what I was just saying to Mr. Marcy's friend about the good sense of not dodging."

He took a fresh glass of the sparkling Catawba and began:

"I was up in Kansas this spring just after the crops got fairly growing. The trouble there was by ordinary. What with the bother on the Missouri border and watching the Delawares, who were swearing vengeance for the murder of one of their tribe who was shot by a Lawrence mob

just out of Simon-pure deviltry, everything was going to the bad and the corn was 'in the grass.'

"This was hard on me, for I had settled a place up there with Tom Sykes, and had sent up six of my likeliest hands to raise corn enough to run my Arkansaw River plantation. I had left everything flourishing at home. The cotton was safe, so the crop to see to was the corn. As I told you, I found the devil to pay.

"Some wool-stealing thieves, who had been run out of Ohio by the people they were keeping sheep for, had come to Kansas and set up in the business of missionary 'Free-Soilers.' Ask old David Tod about them; he knew the lot.

"Beecher's Church had sent out a cargo of Bibles and Sharpe's rifles as the stock-in-trade of the joint concern. It was to be a Western revival of Puritan ways. If the sinners didn't listen to their way of reading Scripture, what so good as rifles to finish the argument? Not altogether a new method of teaching theology, but effective. The logic of forcible conversion is quite as easy to understand as Mr. Marcy's diplomacy.

"One of the missionary sharp-shooting shep-

herds, a tract-distributing, perambulating Chadband, had been tampering with our hands, and Tom had him chased off the place. A short time after—it was three days before I got there—Tom was shot at from a thicket of undergrowth near the road as he was coming home late in the evening from Lawrence. One bullet went through his arm and three grazed his horse, which luckily sent the racer home in a dead run.

"The neighbors and a *posse* from Lawrence organized a hunt for the murdering thieves. Two days after I reached Tom's place news came that the hunters had struck the trail and were running a hot chase. Tom was doing well, and his brothers and two young fellows from Mississippi were staying with him, so I could safely be spared.

"The hunt was over in the Ozark hills, not much out of the way I had intended to take going home. I had to see a half-breed cattle-trader with whom I had had dealings, who lived on the south bank of the Osage, so I thought to see the catching and hanging of the rascals, and then go down the Osage River to the Arkansaw.

"A trader from Memphis, named Forrest, had come to Tom's the night before I left there. He

had some army contracts, and was on his way from Leavenworth to Fort Gibson. He was a muscular, wiry chap, steady-nerved, and quick, with a straightforward look and a sort of lightning flash of the eye that told of pluck you could depend on in a squall, so I was not sorry my road lay alongside his.

"We two started at daybreak. That evening we met up with the Lawrence *posse* on their way home. They had lost the trail of the wool-stealers, and the Indians over on the hills either couldn't or wouldn't help them find it, so they had given up the chase. A half-breed had told them some story of three men heading for a camp of raiders who had been out in the Sioux country, but they thought he was lying.

"We camped together that night. The next day the *posse* started for Lawrence. I went on to the Osage with Forrest. We crossed to the south bank, saw my cattle-dealer, and then made for Fort Gibson.

"The evening we got to the ford, a few miles above Fort Gibson, it was already dark. The wind was shifting and heavy clouds were sweeping up from the West. My horse had gone dead lame and Forrest felt a chill coming on. He

had had the 'shakes' all spring. Taken by and large, we were in a bad fix; and you may be sure we were not sorry when we saw the light from a cabin near the bridle-path we had struck at the ford.

"As we turned a corner into a narrow lane a hill loomed up above the cabin, and lights were shining from the windows of a big house on the hill-top. The cabin-door was open, and a blazing pine knot lit the room and the porch, where a little girl was trying to see who was 'helloing' in the dark. My horse was so dead beat I had got off and was leading him; so I waited in the path while Forrest rode up to the fence and asked, 'Can we stay here all night? I have a chill coming on, and my friend's horse is too lame to go on to Fort Gibson.' An Indian had come out and stood by the child. Inside I could see a huge fellow stumping around upon crutches.

"I thought it one of the half-breed settlements so common near the forts; but the child's first word—and she was the only speaker—contradicted that notion. She answered Forrest in a confounded sight better English than I speak, and she had the strangest, queerest, prettiest manner, so ladylike in modesty, so soldierlike in frank-

ness, that it set me grinning out in the dark at the effect upon Forrest. He had taken off his hat and was holding it in his hand, utterly unconscious of himself or of anything but her. Mr. Marcy's friend talks about the 'imperial child of France.' I tell you the child standing on that rough cabin porch in the blaze of the yellow lightwood looked and talked like she might have been a child of Julius Cæsar. She said her 'father was not at home, but that Bouie's Hill was always open to neighbor or stranger'; that we were 'welcome.' Then to the Indian: 'Open the gate, my chief, and please call Mead to take the horses; Pike will see what can be done for the lame one. If you will come with me, gentlemen, I will show you the path up the hill. Good-night, Pike; good-night, my chief.' After giving her hand to each she led the way up and into a large, comfortable room, where we found two ladies and three children.

"Our little hostess introduced us to 'my stepmother, Mrs. Leszinksky, and my friend Mrs. Carson.' The stepmother was a pale, delicate woman of mixed blood. Mrs. Carson was a pure Seminole. There seemed to be no great love between the stepmother and our little princess;

yet it could not have been prejudice against the Indian blood of the stepmother, for no feeling could have been stronger than the child's friendship for Mrs. Carson and the chief, as you will see.

"From the moment she spoke to us on the porch of the cabin we were in love with our princess. She had bewitched Forrest, and evidently her high mightiness had taken to him.

"Forrest's chill and my lame horse kept us two days at Bouie's Hill. Captain Carson had come, and with him a scout—a rough border fellow, but a famous good fighter, much made of by all at Bouie's Hill, and a special favorite of our princess. He told us the baby adventures of the gracious little lady he called 'Cap'n Rue'; how she was captured by the Indians, and saved from death and restored to her family by the 'Big Chief.'

"The third night, Charley," and the speaker nodded at the gentleman who had asked for the story, "the night before we were to start on to Fort Gibson, came the scrimmage of which you wished me to tell you.

"A company of frontier rowdies and roughs, with the usual sprinkling of jail-birds, had been

out on the border of the Territory. The pretence was a reported raid of the Comanches, but the truth was they were hanging and shooting inoffensive, friendly Indians.

"Now, I don't spin in on philanthropy; and I don't believe an Indian is the equal of a white man, or that he is fit to govern the country. I am not ready to accept Doctor Clarendon's gratis prescription; for only a quack in statesmanship would suggest savages as legislators. He had better try his notion in some English annex in Asia or Australia before applying for an American patent. If the savages England has conquered don't take kindly to his pills he might try them on Ireland. Why, the Irish would swallow all the self-government the British ministry could manufacture from now until the millennium.

"But to get back to our mutton. I feel bound to say we have damnably overdone the killing and stealing business in our dealings with the Indian tribes. Believing that, and having a personal feeling of liking for the folks I was staying with, I was ready to put my hide between one particular Indian and a set of thieves and cut-throats.

"It was about two o'clock in the morning when a sound of shot, a rush on the porch, and a shouting in the house wakened me. Forrest was sleeping in the same room. In less time than I can tell it we got into our boots and breeches and were in the hall, revolvers in hand.

"Captain Carson was barring the front door, and some negro fellows were nailing up the windows and the back door of the hall. Under the hall-lamp stood the Indian chief and Stearns, the scout; they were breathing like men who had had a sharp run. Blood was dropping from the scout's arm and running down the side of the chief's face, where a ball had cut an ugly gash. Standing with them in her night-dress and bare feet was our little princess. She was holding the Indian's hand and listening intently to something he was saying. The doors leading to the rooms each side of the long hall were open, and women and children were running hurriedly from room to room.

"Forrest called Stearns and asked, 'What is the matter?' It seemed then, and it seems yet, that somehow I half expected his answer: 'Them scoundrels that's been out a-stealin'

hosses and a-killin' peaceable Injuns are 'round the house and a-swearin' they're going to hang the Big Chief.' I saw the child throw her arms about the Indian and turn to listen as Stearns went on. 'I'd hearn of the devil-servin' gang upon the Osage, and when I waked with the noise of the hosses' feet in the stony lane I thought most like it was them. I knowed thar was a old spite all 'long the frontier agin the Big Chief, so I called him and started with him to the fort. But it was too late; the bloody varmints was all 'round Pike's house. To break through and get here we had to run a reg'lar gauntlet. We couldn't a-got twenty yards if we'd a-kept on to the fort. I saw our on'y chance was a sudden turn up the hill through the orchard, whar they wahn't expectin' us. As 'twas they did cussed poor shootin', or we'd a-never got here alive.'

"I asked 'if he was much hurt.' He said: 'No, it's on'y a skin-cut in my left arm; the Big Chief got the wust of it.' The child looked up at the Indian's face and then ran into the nearest room. As soon as she was gone the chief sat down on the floor, and Stearns lowered his voice as he continued: 'When them villains

called to Cap'n Carson to give up the Injun and they'd make no more trouble the chief started right out thar. Mrs. Leszinksky told him he'd better go; that 'twould save the lives of the balance. But Cap'n Rue said, when Cap'n Carson tried to stop the chief and he would go on, that if he went out thar she would go with him. He knowed and we knowed she'd a done it, for thar was never a real Leszinksky yet that left a friend in trouble. And her mother was the bravest lady that ever set foot on the frontier; but she is in heaven, and this Mrs. Leszinksky is different stock. The chief saw that if he kept on he'd take Cap'n Rue and the balance of us right into trouble, so he promised her to stay by Cap'n Carson and obey orders. I'm feared we'll have a bloody fight, sir, before we get through. Thar's nigh on to two hundred o' them hell-hounds. I wouldn't mind the odds if it wahn't for the women and children. I've fit with Cap'n Carson, and the Big Chief, and Oscar before. I know they'll do all men kin do; and I'm sure we kin count on you two gentlemen. I kin pretty much tell how a man'll fight when I see his mouth shut and his eyes ablaze.' He looked at

Forrest, and so did I; and I knew I saw a man that no odds in a fight and no storm of battle could make quail.

"You may tell me of Berserker madness and the deeds of demigods, but I would back a Western Anglo-American, when he is in a rage at some wrong, against any son of Adam or the gods that ever struck at an enemy.

"The child came back with a sheet she was tearing into strips. Forrest looked at her as Virginius looks in the play when he turns from the judge to his daughter. The red light in his eyes went out in mist, and he helped the child with the deftness of a surgeon and the kindliness of a woman. Together they bound up the chief's cuts and stanched the bleeding.

"The child's courage was as cool as Forrest's. Neither of them seemed to hear the yells and devilish oaths of the demons who were calling for the rendition of the Indian, and threatening fire and sword if he was not given up. Carson was giving orders to the negroes and getting ready for the villains all the time he parleyed with them.

"Oscar had brought me all the weapons in the house, and Stearns and I were cleaning and

loading them as fast as we could. There were four double-barrelled hunting-pieces, that we loaded with buckshot, and three rifles, two of them these new-fangled breech-loaders. Carson and the scout had their revolvers, so had Forrest and I. Besides the shooting-irons there were three sabres and a half-dozen new axes. You see with six fighting men these weapons were equal to an undrilled mob. I would a-felt mighty comfortable if it hadn't a-been for the women and children.

"My only fear was that the murdering thieves would set fire to the house, as they threatened, but Carson seemed sure they would not. He said: 'They knew that would alarm the fort and bring every able-bodied man in the garrison to Bouie's Hill.' Then I asked if we could not signal the fort or send a messenger. The answer was, 'No; that the wind was blowing from the fort, and even the firing was unheard; that Stearns and the Indian would have got through to the fort had that been possible.' To which Stearns added: 'Thar isn't a gap whar a weasel could get past—that is, thar wahn't when me and the Big Chief came up. But if the cap'n will let me try it alone, I'm 'mighty

willin'. Thar spite seems to be agin nothin' but Injuns; and may be I could get through without thar hurtin' me so I'd be stopped.' Here our princess put in her word. I tell you that child was cooler than I was. She asked Carson if Oscar couldn't go, saying: 'He runs like a deer, and you know Bob is a slow runner. Oscar can clear every fence on the place in a running jump. It's down hill in the start, and he could get to the fort in ten minutes. It is only a mile and a half. Why, *I* could make the distance in fifteen minutes.'

"Oscar was not only willing, but he begged leave to go. Carson again said: 'No; the chances would be a hundred to one that any man leaving the house would be shot the instant he was outside. If Oscar escaped death he would be captured, and we would lose one of our force; and you will soon see we have not a man to spare.'

"The raiders were louder and more violent in their threats. Carson recommenced a parley, and begged them 'to respect the home and the family of a brave officer who was out on the plains in their service.' They yelled back: 'Send out the Indian.' He told them 'the chief

was wounded,' which did not quiet the hell-hounds. They insisted that they be let finish their work, and they would go; while other voices in the crowd called, 'Hang the white renegade who married Wild Cat's daughter. Hang him and the squaw with her half-breed children!' Then for the first time our princess paled; even her scarlet lips lost their color as she looked at Mrs. Carson, who was standing in one of the bed-room doors, with her two boys beside her. The child started to go to Mrs. Carson; then, turning back, she motioned to the chief, who stooped to hear her whispered words. After a moment's speech she put her arms around his neck and kissed the stern face, which was half covered with bloody bandages. Again she whispered, and it was evident he had yielded to her entreaty and made a reluctant promise. When they parted the child was silently weeping, and the Indian's eyes followed her through a mist of unshed tears.

"By this time our preparations were complete. I think I explained how the house was built. There was a long central hall, from which the rooms opened on each side. Across the entire front of the house was a broad, low-railed piazza.

There was a narrow porch at the back hall-door, which connected with a covered passage-way leading to the kitchen. All of the windows of the house had strong, solid oak shutters; only the large store-room in the end of the house nearest the kitchen had no window. Because of that Carson made it the citadel of defence, and provided for the attack by sending there the women and children. The door of this store-room was exactly opposite the door of the dining-room, in which were gathered the servants of the family. The young negro boys and one old man were given axes with which to defend the windows from assault. Across the hall we had built a barrier, made of all the heavy furniture and the mattresses, which cut off the dining-room and the store-room from the front of the house. At the side next to the dining-room door was a narrow opening in the barricade through which we could pass to the front part of the hall and the rooms that opened there.

"We were fairly ready for the enemy when we heard a rush of running feet and the end of a heavy log came crashing through the panels of the double door which Carson had so securely barred. But for that work the doors would

have gone entirely. As the panels gave way there was an exultant yell, and we could see a moving crowd out in the clear starlight.

"I was in doubt if Carson would be the first to begin the fight; but I was not left long in doubt. I knew he was thinking of the threatened murder of his wife and boys when the low-spoken order was given: 'Fire the rifles at the crowd out in the open space where the light is clear. Sweep the porch with the buckshot. Now—fire!'

"It was a deadly volley. The rifle-balls cut into the crowd, while the guns cleared the porch in front of the shattered door. Five still bodies were lying by the log that had dropped from lifeless hands. There were cries and groans as the stricken mob parted to the right and left, and a few poor wounded wretches crawled away.

"There were fifteen or twenty minutes of almost dead quiet—to us it seemed hours. Mrs. Carson came for her husband: 'Mrs. Leszinksky was in violent hysterics,' and something was whispered in an undertone of 'Rue'—what we could not hear. The Indian and Stearns were in a room to the right of the front door, cautiously peering through a crack in the shut-

ters. Behind the broken panels and the guard of unbroken bars Forrest and I were watching for the enemy.

"Very soon after Carson left us we heard him, in a low, cautious tone, call 'Oscar!'

"Then, after a few more of those long watching minutes, Carson came to us with the worst scared face I ever saw a brave man wear. He said something to Stearns about watching from the windows; and then, pulling the door shut upon the Indian and the scout, that they might not hear, he said to Forrest and me: 'Rue has gone to the fort.' I sprang to the door. Forrest, already there, was wrenching out the broken panels, that we might pass, when Carson begged us to stop and listen. 'Wait but one instant,' he said, 'then we will charge the scoundrels. I must tell you how Rue went, and in what direction we must drive the mob.'

"The story was soon told. Rue had climbed into the garret through an opening from the ceiling of the store-room. Her stepmother and two negro women were in the store-room at the time, but they supposed she had gone to watch from a small window that opened on the roof of the back porch. Mrs. Leszinksky had called to

her to be cautious or some one outside would discover the window; but Rue leaned down and said softly: 'When Uncle Billy comes tell him I have gone'—she still supposed the child meant only to the window. Just then the attack began; and in her fright, with her own child crying in her arms, Mrs. Leszinksky forgot it all until after the firing had ceased and Mrs. Carson, coming from the barricade, asked for Rue. They both called, but there was no answering sound from the garret. Mrs. Carson brought her husband, who climbed into the loft and found the child had gone. Telling us the story, he said: 'The window was open. It is a low, wide sash, completely hidden from sight of any one below by the trellised porch, which is closely covered with vines that are trained over the arched gable of the roof of the house. No one could have seen her on the porch or the roof of the covered passage. But she must have crawled over the roof of the kitchen and gone down the chimney, which is built of sticks and clay, and which, for her light weight, would be a secure footing, at the very moment they made that rush at the front door. They were probably on the back porch directly under the child, and so

neglected to watch the path to the deep ravine. That was why she got through it and over the creek safely—for I think she is safe. From the roof of the porch I saw a flying little figure on the ridge beyond the creek vanish out of the starlight into the shadow of the wood near the fort. To make sure that it was Rue, and that she is safe, Oscar will follow her. I ordered him to wait until we charged here to draw attention to this side of the house; then he can risk crossing the kitchen-roof and dropping into the path. Fortunately, the scoundrels are massed over in the orchard. We will charge them there and draw the eyes of their sentries away from the ravine. Only do not tell Stearns or the Indian that Rue has gone. I could do nothing with either of them. The chief would simply throw his life away. Mrs. Leszinksky's taunt, that to save his life he was risking the family of his benefactor, has stung him past endurance.'

"Carson left two of the young negroes to guard the door, ordering them if attacked to hold it as long as they could. Mrs. Carson and her boys were behind the barricade, guns in hand. Carson went to them for a moment. I saw him kiss the boys and press their mother

to his heart. Then he called Stearns and the chief, and we charged through the door into the crowd massed on the end of the piazza and under the trees near by.

"If you could but have seen Forrest!

"I can never tell you just how we fought that fight.

"First we gave them a volley from rifles and guns. Then we rushed into the thick of the crowd with clubbed weapons.

"You can call it what you like, chance or Providence; but some special power, greater than man's, fought for us and turned the fire of the scoundrels upon each other. For when they were driven down the hill there were over a score of corpses and twice that number of wounded and dying men in the house and on the grounds of Bouie's Hill.

"Our losses were not many, but they were grievous to be borne. A party of the raiders got into the house. The Big Chief and Stearns, watching for the safety of the household and the child they believed there, followed them. We heard cries of rage and defiance, a woman's shriek of agony, and the ring of an Indian war-whoop. Leaving the flying cowards

we were driving before us, we ran back to the house.

"Murder was at work in the hall. We were too late to save, but not to avenge. We had our revolvers and bowie-knives, and we made short work of it.

"But Mrs. Carson was shot through the heart; her youngest boy was lying dead beside her. An old white-haired negro had been brained in the dining-room. There were others with slight wounds. Mrs. Leszinksky had fastened the door of the store-room, and, although safe within it, was shrieking like a madwoman. In her frantic fear for her own child and for herself she had fastened the door and so cut off Mrs. Carson and her boys from their last place of safety. Forrest tried in vain to make her understand that the danger was over.

"I left Carson and his wounded boy with the dead mother and son, and I went to where Stearns was kneeling beside the Indian, who had at least a dozen bullets in his body. Just then I heard a fresh trampling on the porch, and, turning to face the enemy, saw the troopers from the fort as a slight little figure with a wan, grief-stricken face flitted past me in the gray dawn.

"There was a pitiful wail, 'O my chief! my chief!' followed by a child's passionate sobbing, and 'Captain Rue' was clasped in the arms of the Indian, who, struggling to rise, caught her, and, pressing her to his heart, fell back dead."

CHAPTER XV.

"See! on my hands this freshening gore
Writes o'er again its crimson proof!"

THE teller of the story and his audience were gone—all but the unseen listener in the adjoining room, who had put aside his writing when the story was asked for.

During the recital the changes in his countenance would have told to a physiognomist a different story from the one he heard. There was the eagerness of a personal interest in his eyes and the pallor of a white terror on his face.

When the story ended a question was asked, to which he listened with indrawn breath. The question had not been answered; the reply was interrupted by the entrance of new-comers, by complaints of the difficulty in finding quarters, and a general move to the office to interview the genial autocrat who then ruled the fortunes of the "Burnet."

The twilight had closed in dusky shadows

within the deserted committee-room. Outside the lamps of the street were lit; but the servant who had come to light the gas had been sent away by the listener, who wished "the twilight peopled with ghosts."

Hartley turned with a shudder to where the street-jets flickered in broken lines across the balcony, as he remembered the phrase. He dropped into a chair near an open window, and, notwithstanding his effort to master thought, he was haunted by a vague shadow of the past. The ghosts would come. He had neither the courage nor the strength to banish those intangible, outline spectres of the phases through which he had passed in that easy descent to the hell where he now was.

Tangled in the web of his broken combinations, with a burning sense of shame for crime and rage at its defeat, Hartley believed he would far rather have encountered palpable personal ghosts than these dim creations of remorseful fear. Looking back through the vista whence he had come, he could see that he had cheated himself in the game of life.

"Curses were coming home to roost"; wrongs were returning "to plague the inventor."

Fortune had been lavish of gifts; and that he had undervalued the greater and overvalued the less had not been counted against him. The hoarded wealth of his uncle had not come to him before he had learned the power of riches. It had freed him from embarrassments. It had opened to him a door of escape from a profession that was not only distasteful but a constant menace to him. It had brought him ease, luxury, social rank, and a certain influence in politics that he had begun to crave. It had put him upon a plane of material equality with the proud family into which his sister had married. Indirectly it had won him his wife, for it had so placed him that the winning was less difficult.

Up to this point the retroaction of thought had but unveiled the spectres of regret, for thus far it had only uncovered sins that the world holds venial. Of sin in the sight of God, or sin as a wrong to humanity, he was shameless—as in truth most men are.

But the spectres that came after gave Hartley pause. The buckler of his conscience was the esteem of men, and through that buckler Nemesis was about to strike. Again and again he

asked himself: "What do they know? What did they discover at Bouie's Hill?"

With the mention of Bouie's Hill the spectre of Margaret Leszinksky arose. The blue eyes looked into the depths of his soul and saw where the garnered hate had festered into crime. Yes, he hated all the proud Cartarets, most of all the woman who was his wife only in appearance—the wife so needful to his weal; the wife yet held to an outward bondage through the persuasion of his sister. But the thought of his wife had conjured up other spectres—his wife's brother and her father? The boy killed in the hunting-field; surely that was an accident! He had warned Tom that the horse was vicious, was given to mad outbreaks of temper at times. But who would have believed the story of the English dealer, that "the horse would wait and watch for his revenge if the spur was used"? As to Judge Cartaret, the family physician had foretold what might happen from any sudden shock. And the shock had been sudden because he would not listen. "He would have the letter, and would not hear the warning of what was to come. It was his own fault." Then Hartley cursed them all, and cursed himself,

that a quadroon girl should have cost so dear.

The first wrong to Lucy had never troubled him, nor did it now. He did not count the murder of Truth and Innocence a crime. They were mere abstractions, or, at the most, essences of entities that in the reasoning of a sensualist were outside the life or the comprehension of a quadroon. As for Oscar's spoilt life, that was the merest nothing. A qualm there would have been absurd. It was even beneath a jest.

But there was a later wrong to Lucy—an offence that had violated law. In that he had touched crime. "Would it come in judgment against him?" That was the question of his conscience. Would he be found out? The exposure would be awkward—that was all. He felt no remorse for what he regarded as an expedient to which the senseless obstinacy of a woman had forced him. If Lucy had been content to give up his child quietly there would have been no trouble. It had never occurred to him that the woman had right or part in the child. It did not occur to him now that there was any injustice or wrong in taking the child from her. His only anxiety in the matter was whether the legal

offence would be brought home to him. For the child's sake, as well as his own, he hoped the expedient he had adopted would be successful.

The child was a beautiful and ideal likeness of himself; she touched the egoist through his vanity and his self-love. Next to himself he loved the child; so for her sake, almost as much as for his own, he trusted that her mother would be eternally dumb. Before this evening he had felt secure of her silence. But that shadowy threat from Bouie's Hill had unnerved him, had made him so fanciful in his terror that he dreaded all uncovering of the past. Possibly the discovery at Bouie's Hill was a mere nothing—an upspringing of fears started into life by the telling of that story. He resolved to go and meet whatever Fate might bring.

Rising, Hartley looked out into the night, then fell back in his seat shaking with the agony of his apprehensions. He had seen the ghost of Lucy, a pallid, corpse-like ghost, beneath the yellow glare of a street-lamp. From the upturned face of the mother he had robbed he shrank back aghast.

CHAPTER XVI.

"Some who spoke on that summer evening are no longer here to speak or listen. Some who were young then have topped the hill and are descending towards the valley of the shadows. . . . Ah! ghosts of youth, again ye draw near! Old figures glimmer through the cloud. Old songs echo out of the distance."—THACKERAY.

THREE hours later a brilliant assembly had gathered in that perfectly proportioned room which was then the ladies' *salon* of the "Burnet House." This *salon* was on the first floor of an oblong wing which was thrown lengthwise from the south front; thus it formed a right angle with the façade of the main building above the Third Street entrance. The windows opened to the floor upon the balconies on the east side which overhung Vine Street. To the south and west the windows gave upon a broad stone flagging which roofed the shops and offices of the outer basement. On the north two doors led to the main hall, which ran parallel with Third Street until it crossed the first door of entrance to the *salon*. There it was intersected by the smaller hall leading from the Vine Street entrance.

The central chandelier, from which hung in widening circles multitudinous pendants, the sidelights with their flashing reflections in the superb mirrors, illuminated the room, which was the setting of the first scene of the drama that opened in Cincinnati in the summer of 1856. In it were gathered that night an assemblage of actors who were to be famous and prominent figures in that drama.

Near the southwest window, through which our Arkansian colonel and the friend to whom he told that story of Bouie's Hill have just entered, a party of gentlemen are discussing with evident temper the Kansas-Nebraska bill and its sponsor. Above the tallest of the group towers the ambitious young candidate who, sure of the vice-presidency—which he feels within his grasp—is hoping for something more which a fortuitous shake of the political dice-box or a deadlock in the convention may give him. Some over-crafty or over-timid move of the cautious, secretive Buchanan may embroil him with the partisans of Pierce and Douglas, yet leave a clear field for the running of the youngster who is entered under the Buchanan colors. Close to Breckenridge, and talking with him, is a young

politician as yet scarcely known outside of Ohio, although there he is already recognized as a leader of the "Straight-outs." Listen to what he is saying:

"It is speciously framed to deceive the very elect. It will keep the promise to the ear and break it to the sense. It is a cheap bid for the Presidency—"

A voice interrupted:

"I say, Vallandigham, is the Presidency to be underlet to the lowest bidder?"

"Hardly, else Pierce were sure of the nomination, which might suit book-making 'Hards' and stall-fed treasury hacks, but which I trust in the end will not suit you, Butler, or your Massachusetts delegation."

"Oh! I'm easily pleased, but it's devilish hard to please Griswold. He's an obstinate ass and an awkward marplot. Set him to cutting uppers for the Democracy, and he'll cut the three-cornered hole by which the pattern hangs every time. He's a statesman through the saving grace of old Deacon Adams's rule, who put his boy John 'to learning because he hadn't sense enough to be a shoemaker.'"

"But with Pierce out of the way will not Massachusetts go solid for Buchanan?"

"That is as difficult a conundrum as the verdict of a petit jury. It would take the head graduate of a guessing-school to answer your question."

"But they will not go to Douglas?"

"Which, from your face and accent, means—to the devil."

"It would be just that. Douglas is a demagogue, but an able one. I was saying to Breckenridge, That Kansas-Nebraska bill is a two-sided shield with which Douglas will draw to him the Free-Soil deserters from the Democracy, as he has drawn the Southern delegations, who will not believe that he is only leading them to the threshold of a new controversy."

But the Arkansian and his friend are forced back by the incoming adherents of the little Illinoisian, and they cross to a gay party in one of the Vine Street windows.

"Who is that beautiful blonde, Charley, next to Hayne?"

"Julia Dean. Have you never seen her play?"

"No."

"Then see her in *Parthenia*, O uncivilized Arkansian! and you will wish only to be a

savage, and *Ingomar*, that she may crown your cup with flowers and teach you the physiological puzzle, 'two hearts that beat as one.'"

"Does she play as well as Agnes Robertson?"

"No, oh! no, most *Violet*-loving backwoodsman. But you can see with your never-to-be-bespectacled eyes, my sun-gazer, that the divine Julia is divine through right of beauty. She seems Aphrodite's self in the faint, rosy mist of that diaphanous gown."

"I am not sure of the likeness; I never saw the other one. And, come to think of it, none of the old fellows that tell the story say anything of a gown."

"You prosaic, literal, and most commonplace of politicians, not a step nearer shall you go to Julia! Turn this way; now listen attentively to the grandiloquent Toombs." This is what they heard:

"The white is the superior race and the black the inferior; and subordination, with or without law, will be the status of the African in this mixed society. And, therefore, it is the interest of both, and especially of the black race, and of the whole society, that this status should be fixed, controlled, and protected by law."

As the ponderous sentence ended two gentlemen left the circle around the orator and joined the friends. They shook hands cordially with the Arkansian, who presented "Mr. Singleton of Mississippi, Colonel Forsyth of Alabama, my old friend and college chum, the Hon. Charles Grandison."

Fresh salutations, and then, as the newly-met friends exchanged personal inquiries, Grandison looked curiously at the Mobile editor, the leading opinion-maker of the Southern press. Small, well formed, with an almost femininely beautiful face, the shapely head crowned by clustering curls, exquisitely and carefully dressed, the famous editor had more of the air and manner of a squire of dames than of one of the uncrowned kings of the press.

Singleton was a very different type of the genus Southerner. There was in his bearing a very apparent mannerism, in which a slight pretentiousness struggled with a naturally joyous and mercurial temperament. But this surface defect would wear off with age and the friction of the file which the world is always ready to furnish. There was substance enough beneath to withstand, and be the better for, the scraping

of the bark. He was sound at the core, sturdy and strong as heart of oak; the peeling off of small vanities would only assist growth; it was not as if a mere fibrous pith was to be exposed to wind and weather.

But this study of Grandison's was not a one-sided peering into flesh to find the quality of spirit. The subjects of his mental scalpel were in their turn taking his measure, and it was evident that the measure pleased. Both were cordial in their readiness to include him in that mystic circle which fences in friends and turns its infinitesimal thorns of resistance against its antipathies. The evidence of the attraction was that Singleton's mannerism succumbed to his temperament, while Forsyth lost the bored air of a drawing-room lounger.

To be perfectly fitted to his vocation the editor must be a many-sided man of letters, with at least one side of the polygon art-receptive, if not art-creative. Being perfectly fitted to his vocation, Forsyth was an artist in the perceptive and appreciative sense. An interpreter of art in the plastic sense he was not, nor could he be; for that the divine fire and the hand of the artisan were lacking.

Through that perceptive and appreciative sense Forsyth saw Grandison. Outline and color I can describe for you as Forsyth saw them. (But the worthlessness of words, the littleness of written letters, oppress and restrain me when I try to spell on this page the outer expression of the qualities which bound and still bind me with "hooks of steel" to the old friend whose likeness was daguerreotyped in my memory in the days of my childhood.) He saw a frank, fair-faced gentleman of the Saxon type which suggests a Roman ancestor, with eyes of that deep blue which we find in the vaulted arch of the sky when we look through the fleecy, sun-driven clouds of morning—a man of grand mien and noble presence.

Singleton and the Arkansian had instantly fallen into talk of their respective delegations, which grew confidential and unconsciously exclusive. Grandison and Forsyth—illuminated by magnetic consciousness—each excused to the other by a look the friend for whom he felt responsible. Each smiled his acceptance of the excuse. Thus, under the glow of a nascent friendship, their talk began—talk that wandered outside of the scene and the topics which were

echoed and re-echoed through the heated air of the political furnace now ablaze in Cincinnati.

There was happy mention of mutual friends—men of letters, artists, art; that last was a road that led to Rome. Then, in wider talk of Italy free their sympathies grew together. They were both enthusiasts. Grandison's enthusiasm was outspoken in eloquent, fiery bursts of feeling; Forsyth's was a lambent flame that flowed from the pen's point in lines of light. So the polished, elegant writer was a willing listener to one of the most rarely eloquent talkers an unripe civilization has ever produced. Such a listener is an inspiration, always putting a conversationalist at his best by a well-timed look of question or of sympathetic assent. The triumph of Cavour's success could not have been more nobly told in the Roman forum by the silver-tongued Cicero than it was in this Western *salon*. Then Forsyth suggested:

"The actual state of Italy is not only dangerous to its neighbors, but dangerous in its bearing upon European alliances."

This brought such a picture of revolutionary Italy that the listener seemed to hear the far-off heart-beat of a throbbing volcano.

Then description was lost in anticipation, and the beautifully modulated voice grew calmly sweet as the speaker wished for Italy "only that constitutional, moderate government which will know how to assuage passion and conserve the principle of development."

A gentleman touched Forsyth: "Sorry to interrupt, but we must leave at once or we shall be late. The ladies are ready, and you know," with a bow to Grandison, "it is dangerous to keep them waiting." And the handsome Alabamian walked to where Governor Brown, of Tennessee, stood beside his stepdaughter and two friends who were waiting for the tardy gallants.

A hand-shake and a promise for the morrow, and again the Arkansian and Grandison slowly passed group after group of ladies and their attendant courtiers, and of politicians and their satellites. In the centre of one such group stands and *poses* the saturnine Benton, too vain to think he is but a foil to the handsome man beside him, whose leonine head and soldierly figure attract universal attention.

"Who is that splendidly handsome fellow, Roane?" asked Grandison.

"From the paint you put on the description I

suppose you mean Price. He is standing there by Benton."

"Yes, standing there. I swear he looks a demigod."

"If you could hear him roar in a battle-field you would swear he was a bull of Bashan. I heard him once, in New Mexico, order a charge, and his voice not only reached the squadron of dragoons two hundred yards away and sent them headlong at the enemy, but so frightened the enemy's cannoneers that the dragoons captured the battery without drawing a sabre. The Mexicans were in full run before our fellows shook themselves to try their saddles."

"Is he not leading the cohorts now for Benton?"

"Yes. Benton caught him young; and Price, for a man of more than ordinary common, and uncommon, sense, is the most stubborn ass alive. You'll see to-morrow how he'll carry Benton's colors into that convention."

A movement of the crowd brought them near the outer edge of a circle which surrounded a group of talkers. The central figure of that group was a queer, homely little woman, gaily-plumaged and bright-eyed, who seemed the

quasi-president of the coterie which had attracted the attention of the friends.

The speaker of the moment was so pronounced in resemblance to the first Napoleon that the likeness could not fail to strike the most careless observer.

"Isn't that Soulé who is speaking to Mrs. Carisbrooke, Charley?" asked the Arkansian.

"Yes. Do you not know him?"

"Never set eyes on him before. But I had heard of the likeness to Bonaparte. It is absolutely wonderful. It is the same figure and pose of the head—the very face, the clear, penetrating eyes that look at you out of David's portrait. Put the coronation robes on him and it would seem a resurrection. He would electrify the old sentimentalists who dream of past glory in the *Hôtel des Invalides*."

"It is a perfect resemblance, and I fancy the voice must be the same, it is so exquisite in tone, so magnetic in quality. Every inflection, every modulation tells of the orator who, if persuasion fail, will carry his auditors by his own intensity. He hides imperiousness under the guise of enthusiasm, and by seducing the imagination blinds the judgment. If Douglas's de-

feat was not a foregone conclusion Soulé would carry the convention to him ; as it is, even Louisiana will finally follow Slidell to Buchanan. But here comes William the saturnine. How are you, Horry ?"

"As well as an honest man may be when he breathes the air infected by politicians."

"Is there such contagion in it ?"

"It is pestilential, most foul and unnatural ; but how does this base world treat you, my Hamlet ?"

The new-comer placed his hand with a light, caressing movement upon the shoulder of Grandison.

"'Excellently well, i' faith' ; and I am glad you have come out of your tub, O Diogenes ! But 'what make you here,' my friend ?"

"I am brought by 'the rash humor which my mother gave me'—the inheritance of a grain of Eve's curiosity. I am watching by the deathbed of this republican oligarchy. Do you know, Charley, when this scene is shifted the last act in the drama begins ?"

"O reddest of red-republicans ! you have come back from France a male Cassandra. You are deceived by the bubble of the caldron that boils

over the fire of the convention. It will settle, my friend, and it will clear itself of the scum. There is such potency in the master ingredients that the poison which ignorance has gathered will be neutralized. You forget, O prophet of evil! that this turmoil of the nation is a recurrent symptom—an ague-fit that shakes the body politic at each Presidential election."

"This time, my optimist, the fit will shake the nation into fragments. There is death in the pot. And senseless quacks will try blood-letting. Every sign proves that the end is near at hand. Even so slight a thing as a woman's opinion leans that way. Listen to what our little lady of 'the hill' is saying to Soulé."

They could hear distinctly the words:

"I believe with you, Mr. Soulé, that if elected Douglas would succeed in harmonizing the contending factions for the time—but, mark you, only for the time. Unfortunately the divisions in the parties are widening into a national division. The untoward contempt of Southern extremists is repaid by hatred that grows more bitter as the North feels the balance of power slipping Southward. A Southerner by birth and a Northerner by residence, I can see both

sides of the shield that is waiting the touch of a hostile lance. In a federation like ours contempt and hatred are deadly qualities. They will kill the unity of the nation, as they have killed the harmony of the States."

A movement in the group revealed the listeners in the outer circle. A wave of the little hand and a glad salutation called them nearer.

"Ah! I see, Mr. Soulé, that you already know my friends. Mr. Grandison thinks me slightly demented on this sectional question; but Mr. Horry will prove to you that there is method in my madness."

Touching the lady's hand as he bowed to Soulé, Horry said: "In plain words, the priestess descends from the tripod and leaves me to unravel the perplexed and mystic meaning of the oracle."

Soulé. "Mrs. Carisbrooke has already proved the soundness of her judgment by her selection of an advocate."

Horry. "I deny the judgment. It was only the sixth sense of a woman—the instinctive tyranny of the sex that chooses the readiest and most unsuspicious victim. Counting on my good-nature, on my ignorance of woman's ha-

bitual and inherent perfidy, she unhesitatingly proceeds to immolate me upon the altar of her vanity. She sacrifices the most devoted of her subjects to a strange god."

The bow to Soulé accented the last words.

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Now may Heaven keep me from treacherous allies and need of aid! I have proved nothing to Mr. Soulé except my poverty in friends. I abandon politics to the Furies, and so will you all. A woman comes who will make you forget that I exist. But when the well-beloved Brutus stabs one is content to fall at the feet of a rival. Mr. Horry's defection has driven me to such extremes that I am glad to see my beautiful enemy."

She made place for two ladies who had just entered. The gentlemen rising, she presented them to Mrs. Cartaret and Mrs. Hartley. "The Carisbrooke" kept the shuttle of conversation flying. While the sparkling current of light talk ripples and flows about Mrs. Hartley I can see the change the last six years have wrought in her.

Slight and stately she was; slender and haughty she is. Beautiful, as her pallid youth promised; but it is a dead, statuesque beauty,

where life and warmth are lacking. Expressionless, except for the sombre light in the dark eyes and the occasional deepening of the faint, downward lines which droop from the corners of the exquisitely curved lips; but faint as they are, the lines are hieroglyphic characters, that tell how the soul of the woman is warped by the indwelling of contempt, which has perverted faith and dislodged love and charity.

Messengers came for Soulé and the Arkansian, calling them to a caucus of the Southern delegates—a summons both were loath to obey. For the prince of conversationalists was talking to intelligent and interested listeners, while the Arkansian was watching, with unconscious betrayal of admiration, a face that held him by the rare charm of perfect beauty.

The deep-set, gray eyes of "The Carisbrooke" were of penetrative quality. As the two gentlemen disappeared through one of the windows which opened on the broad platform above the Third Street entrance, she turned to Mrs. Hartley:

"I acquit you of flirtatious intent, my proud Kate; but nevertheless that poor 'Arkansaw traveller' is pierced through and through. His

indigenous bowie-knife could not have made deeper wounds than have the eyes which were shining so far above him. You cannot help it, my dear. All your scorn goes for naught. Men are such simpletons, and a beautiful face is the touchstone which tries them. The mask of wisdom with which they manage to deceive us falls before the talisman and gives to view the folly of a fool. Those we blindly think the wisest are often only the weakest. Now, Soulé has talked his best this evening, not because I listened understandingly, my dear, but because he looked at you while he talked to me. Could there have been a more pronounced proof of the constitutional tendency of the masculine brain to idiocy?"

The action which accompanied her talk, fitting a gesture to every phrase, gave to Mrs. Carisbrooke's speech a certain indescribable piquancy. All laughed. Even Mrs. Hartley's proud lips unclosed, and as the white teeth flashed the ghost of a lost dimple indented the oval roundness; but the dimple vanished, and the smile lost its sweetness as it fell under the scornful arch of the thin nostrils.

Just then Doctor Carisbrooke came into the

room and joined the group. All looked and spoke a welcome. The smile of his wife transfigured the plain face of the homely woman. With the glowing light of love in it, it had a positive and attractive beauty.

The doctor had a noble head and a sweet, wholesome countenance. I can find no other words which express my meaning so fully. If some carping critic cavil at the expression let him better it. I dare affirm that any lover of truth and good English would say the words "sweet and wholesome" were well chosen had he looked into Doctor Carisbrooke's honest face and met the glance of those penetrative yet kindly eyes. The breadth of the man's humanity made this healer of the body a fit physician of the "mind diseased"; and besides there was in his manner a self-reverence which proved that a pure soul was lodged in a clean body. To get the best that is possible out of the school of life these conditions are imperative.

The wise teacher would have taught a more philosophically practical lesson on the upbuilding of character had he left out the question of precedence and insisted that "cleanliness is the beginning of godliness."

After cordial greetings had been exchanged the doctor, refusing a seat, nodded to his wife.

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Yes, I understand that Jovian signal. It orders a start, an instant leave-taking. It means that I must quit this Eden of budding and growing politicians, this convocation of great and small statesmen, to jog up Vine Street hill behind a pair of balky horses that Carisbrooke's compassion forced him to buy from a brutal expressman. His sympathy is a stream that runs as evenly and full as a millrace for all the animal kingdom—except his wife."

Dr. Carisbrooke. "You are a woman, therefore to be—taken with several grains of salt. You know, my dear, that they are excellent horses. Sometimes they wish to stop on the wayside to reason with you when you are impatient and would have them driven hurriedly up a steep grade. But, like their master, they give up and go on stolidly when reason cannot get a hearing."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Having listened to balky reason, I am ready to try the horses. Our friends have promised to take their luncheon with us to-morrow. After you make your morn-

ing visits you are to bring Mrs. Cartaret and Kate home with you."

Dr. Carisbrooke. "I shall be delighted. The ladies will know to-morrow that you have slandered my bays. Have you left an invitation for Captain Hartley?"

Mr. Grandison. "Horry and I have promised Mrs. Carisbrooke to bring him if he can leave his delegation. We will wait until the last moment that he may come."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "He must come, and my luncheon must not wait. I shall expect you at two o'clock."

Horry. "The impossible shall come to pass at your bidding. You shall eat your luncheon smilingly, madam, 'that good digestion may wait on appetite.'"

CHAPTER XVII.

"What! there's a heart inside me, and I've bought a candle for the Most Holy Virgin before now."

THE little group left the room together. At the foot of the wide staircase near the door "Good-nights" were said to Mrs. Cartaret and Mrs. Hartley.

Horry and Grandison walked on with the doctor and Mrs. Carisbrooke. Near the door of the reception-room they met two gentlemen. One had lost an arm, and both had that erect military carriage which said plainly, "soldiers." Doctor Carisbrooke's hand was laid on the empty sleeve: "Leszinksky!" "Carisbrooke!" were simultaneous exclamations. Then the doctor shook hands with Leszinksky's companion, and the doctor's distant cousin, Major Leszinksky, and Captain Carson were presented to Mrs. Carisbrooke and the gentlemen standing beside her.

A swarthy, handsome boy, with high cheek-bones, black hair, and flashing eyes, had come

from the reception-room and waited near the officers. The race to which he belonged was so evident, the features so marked, that when Carson introduced him as "my son Stanislaus" there was surprise in every face except Grandison's. He instantly understood that these were two of the actors in the story he had heard of the fight at Bouie's Hill. He thought of the Indian mother and "Captain Rue" as he watched the boy's face and listened to Leszinksky saying:

"It is not only a pleasure to meet you, Carisbrooke; it is a special providence. We have just arrived, and are told that it is impossible for us to have rooms in the 'Burnet.' My daughter is quite ill. She is lying on a sofa in the reception-room. I was going for a physician first, and then to search for quarters. The doctor is found, and I hope you can tell me where we can find a place of rest for the night in this crowded town. But first come and tell me what to do for my child. She has been nervous and ill for some time. Doctor Randall ordered me to come north with her. This afternoon she had a severe chill, and now the fever has made her slightly delirious."

The doctor went into the room with Leszinksky. Carson and his son followed them.

Standing there waiting for their return, Grandison rapidly told Mrs. Carisbrooke of the fight at Bouie's Hill, of Mrs. Carson, and of "Captain Rue." The talker was eloquent, the listener impressionable and quick in sympathy.

When the doctor returned with a hesitating, half-questioning look on his face, his wife anticipated his question:

"Bring these relatives of yours with us. They must come. We have room—or somehow I will make room—for them all. Why, Carisbrooke, I would take Molly out of her bed or turn you into the street, to find shelter for that child. Tell Major Leszinksky—no, you stay here; I will tell them myself."

And she was heard talking to the gentlemen, urging until they could no longer refuse.

Dr. Carisbrooke asked Grandison: "Charley, what bee has stung my wife?"

"Generous sympathy with the heroic."

"Does the army march with the insect always at the front, or is it the special privilege of these two officers?"

For the third time that evening the story was

told, this last time in a quick grouping of general facts. But the large-hearted man understood how and why his wife was so moved. She came back to them with the tears rolling down her cheeks, but she said with a triumphant ring in her voice:

"They will come now, at once. Go out and get a close carriage. You and Major Leszinksky and Lucy can go in that with Rue. I found Lucy waiting in the reception-room for me. She was already attending to the child's wants. She can nurse her. You know how she nursed Molly and how devoted she is to children. She will go in the carriage and hold the child so the jolting will not disturb her. Captain Carson and his son will go with me and the balky bays." She laughed nervously as she brushed aside her tears. In less than twenty minutes Horry and Grandison, having seen the carriages off, were walking eastward on Fourth Street.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"O Christ of the seven wounds, who look'dst through the dark
To the face of thy mother! consider, I pray,
How we common mothers stand desolate."

BEFORE breakfast the doctor visited his young patient. Major Leszinksky was sitting beside his daughter, who seemed to be sleeping quietly. As the doctor touched the slender little hand the child opened her eyes and watched his face as he counted the pulse-beats.

"You do not remember our bringing you here, Rue?" asked the doctor.

"No; are you a doctor?"

"Yes; and I am going to cure you. You are very much better already. My wife will bring you a cup of chocolate and some toast; then, if you feel strong enough to see a visitor, Molly wishes to come."

"Who is Molly?"

"She is my daughter—an only daughter, like yourself."

"I am not papa's only daughter. Steenie is with her mother in St. Louis. I was my mother's

only daughter." There was a tremulous shiver in the sweet, low voice. With one hand smoothing back the clustering curls from the fair, open brow, and the other holding firmly both the restless, nervous little hands, the doctor continued:

"Your father and I are relatives and old friends. I knew him when he was a boy at Mount Hope. The Albemarle Masons were cousins of my mother. You and Molly are far-away cousins. I hope you will be friends. I have spent many happy days at Mount Hope. I loved my kinspeople there dearly. For the sake of those old days I trust you and Molly will care for each other."

"I like you." And the slender fingers clasped the doctor's broad palm. "Bring Molly to see me. I hope I shall—I want to love her. I will if I can. But you know love is free. I shall never try again to love any one. I have tried to love some one because it was right. But it was not right; and now I hate."

"My daughter!"

"Yes, papa, I do. But I shall not say whom. I am hurt, doctor—hurt terribly here." And she slipped one little hand from his clasp and laid it on her breast. "But I am trying to live for

papa's sake and for Steenie's sake—for I do love Steenie. I love her dearly. Papa knows that I do. But Laha and my chief! I cannot forget. O Laha! O my Chief!" And the little frame shook with quick-coming sobs.

Mrs. Carisbrooke, who had come in quietly and was listening to the child, impulsively pushed her husband aside and caught Rue in her arms.

"God bless you, Rue! My darling, darling Rue! Your mother was my friend and playmate—your own mother, my child. For Margaret Cartaret's sake I love her daughter. For her sake will you love me, Rue?"

As the child held back those long, quivering sobs and raised a pale, thin little face to look into Mrs. Carisbrooke's eyes, the doctor was more provoked and angry with his wife than he had ever believed it possible for him to be.

But as Rue's arms were thrown around Mrs. Carisbrooke's neck, and her tears came in a full shower the doctor put his hand in his friend's arm, and they silently left the suffering child to the ministration of that spirit of motherhood which has strayed out of Paradise to dwell in the hearts of the daughters of Eve.

As the gentlemen left the room a wild, scared

face came from between the muslin curtains at the foot of the bed. Tearless, aching eyes gazed a moment at the lady and the child, who were unconscious of the watcher. Then, crouching down, the quadroon whom Mrs. Carisbrooke had called "Lucy" crept through the door of the adjoining room, and, throwing herself upon her face, begged of the Eternal Giver, not life, but death and forgetfulness.

CHAPTER XIX.

"Que scais-je."

DOCTOR CARISBROOKE and Leszinksky found Molly Carisbrooke seated on the steps of the vine-clad porch.

Touched by the thought of the child he had just left, by her grief and comparative loneliness, Doctor Carisbrooke made the most of the distant relationship when he introduced his daughter.

"Major Leszinksky is a connection of ours, Molly. His dark locks have bleached so much sooner than my sandy pow that you scarcely dare 'cousin' him; so he is to be your 'Uncle Stan.'"

There was a tender, compassionate look on the girl's face as she gave her hand to the gentleman thus presented and looked into the deep, mournful eyes that were bent upon her.

"I am very glad to see my Uncle Stan. I hope Rue—my cousin Rue—is better."

"She is much better, my dear. Your good father's skill found quick ways of help, and

your mother's kindness was of equal value. I had flattered myself that I was a tolerable nurse; but your mother and the woman Lucy are graduates of the best school. No one could have cared for my child more tenderly. And now I can see in your eyes, my dear little cousin, the help you will bring Rue. She is suffering, not only from illness, but from a very grievous loss, a sorrow hard for us all to bear, crushing to one so young and so loving. I think, my dear, you will help her to bear it."

"I will do my best, Uncle Stan." And the child just budding into maidenhood, with a modest, blushing grace, turned her cheek to receive the proffered kiss.

Molly had her father's kindly brown eyes and frank, fair face. Fifteen years of age, well grown, with a serious, womanly manner, she seemed utterly unlike that bright butterfly, her mother. But there was a decided though hidden resemblance. There was between mother and daughter a mysterious unity of tastes and ways of thought, a magnetic sympathy in likes and dislikes, that completed the girl's dual nature. In this fortunate child of a perfect marriage there was a harmoniously blended in-

heritance of responsive and appreciative qualities.

Carson and his handsome son came up the shaded country road and entered the gate. The doctor and Leszinksky walked down to meet them as Molly seated herself again upon the steps.

"You are early afoot, Captain Carson," said the doctor. "You should have let this young friend of mine have eight hours' sleep after the fatigue of yesterday."

"He was the offender. He called me at daylight. He wished to see his Uncle Stan and hear news of Rue. After we learned she had rested so quietly and was better we walked to Avondale and arranged to go to Oxford to-day."

"Not to-day; surely you will not leave us so soon?"

"My sister expects us. Delay would alarm her, as she knows Rue has been ill since—since our loss." The frowning brow and the flash of the blue eyes gave angry emphasis to the trembling lines about the grieved mouth. The boy's hand touched his father's, who clasped it firmly as he added: "My leave is nearly ended, and as my son will remain with my sister I wish to see

something of her new home. My sister's husband, Mr. McCormack, is one of the professors in the college, and it is the best I can do for my son to leave him there until he is old enough to enter West Point. He wishes to be a soldier."

All eyes were fastened on the boy. He was looking at Molly. The girl, calmly unconscious of self, or rather with the poise of superior age, reached out her hand, and, drawing the boy to her side, took his cap in one hand and with the other smoothed the tumbled black locks that were shading the dark, flashing eyes. The two officers looked at her and then at each other, and walked together to the gate.

"Whom does that young girl remind you of, Stan?"

"Of Margaret—the same lovely, unselfish nature, bright and sweet and womanly. I wish my namesake was the elder of those two."

"It would be of no use. He would never love her as he does Rue."

"Rue is the elder, and they are like brother and sister."

"I think you mistake the relationship. Rue regards Stan as a younger brother, and now, sorrowing for and with him, she gives him the

affection she gave his mother and Willy. But the boy worships her as a queen absolute. I do not suppose he would ever presume to offer her a more personal love; but it will keep him free. He loves her as I loved her mother."

"And you know, Carson, what that brought. You were her brother, as you have been mine. But I do not know why you should say Stan would presume if he loved Rue. Any gentleman may love a pure and free maiden. If they cared for each other, as lovers do, you know how gladly I would give my daughter to your son. There is no inequality except age. But with Rue's imperious temper that would be a fatal inequality. If she ever marries I think she will marry some one many years her senior. And I am not sure but that would be best. She has reverence for age; and, with her, love will go with reverence. If it should not her life will be ruined. I wish your son was nearer your own age, Carson."

And the solitary arm was thrown over his comrade's shoulder. They smiled sadly in each other's eyes and walked back to the steps. The doctor, who was tying up a climbing rose, began:

"My girl wants to keep your boy, Captain

Carson. The great grief of her life is that she cannot be a soldier. She was at West Point last summer with my sister; and that visit to her aunt, together with the influence of the cadets' buttons, has developed a military mania that threatens to be incurable. Now, this boy of yours looks a born fighter, and her woman's instinct tells her there is material for a hero. So she would fain keep him. Her mother will aid and abet her in her design. You had better yield gracefully and stay two or three days longer. Mrs. Carisbrooke will visit your defection upon me. I pray you stay."

"If I had longer time at my disposal, doctor, I would stay until I feared you were beginning to regret your hospitality. I must go with my son to-day; but, if your invitation hold good until then, I will return here day after to-morrow."

"It holds good for then and for all the future; whenever you can give us a day, or a week, or a month, we shall be glad to have you a guest at 'Rosebank.'"

"Thanks! I shall remind you of that invitation whenever a kindly fortune brings me near

Cincinnati. I hope I may see Mrs. Carisbrooke before we go. I trust she has slept since daybreak. Leszinksky told me that she would stay with Rue all night."

"She had a short sleep. She says she is not at all tired. She is with Rue now. I never knew my wife to tire when either sympathy or regard demanded endurance. She has a wonderful fund of reserved vitality and nervous force; and even better staying qualities than my stolid, solid little Molly, to whom I have neglected to present you."

Molly shook hands with Captain Carson, and then smilingly sank back into her favorite corner with her head leaning against the vine-covered baluster.

The doctor. "This is Molly's reception-room, Captain Carson. She likes the upholstery of vines and the gilding of sunlight. The child of a butterfly, she revels in air and sunshine."

Molly. "I shall tell mamma how you slander her. It would serve you right, papa, if your butterflies borrowed the bee's sting. But time will do us justice. Uncle Stan and Captain Carson, if they stay with us a few days, will see how you snub and ill-treat your womenkind."

The doctor. "A household of victims, upon my word! Would it disturb you too much, you trampled little worm—no, I mean you sun-singed *papillon*—if I ask you to tell me how soon we are likely to get our breakfast?"

Molly. "I am glad there is something you can learn of me, papa. Breakfast is ready and waiting; I made the waffles my own self with my nice freckled hands. I told Samson not to ring the bell; it might disturb Cousin Rue. If you think mamma cannot come I am ready to serve at the coffee-urn."

The doctor. "You are a miraculous golden butterfly. Why, child, you can think! You are the loveliest specimen of the genus *lepidoptera* that was ever alight upon rose or honeysuckle. Let me look closely at your speckled wings, that I may classify you," taking her hands. "And with these you actually fanned common eggs into cates that are fit for a royal table? Come, my friends; with stomach expectant and mind at ease, I can bid you come."

In the breakfast-room they met other guests; for the convention had brought visitors to every private house in Cincinnati.

Breakfast was over, and yet Mrs. Carisbrooke

had not put in an appearance. The gentlemen had gathered in "Molly's reception-room," but Molly herself had gone to visit her new cousin.

Carson's conveyance was driven to the gate and duly packed with his and his son's belongings. The doctor had decided that Rue must not be excited by adieus; so, leaving messages for Mrs. Carisbrooke and the two girls, Carson and the boy went Oxfordwards.

Then the doctor again visited Rue. Meeting Leszinksky as he left the child, he said:

"Go and tell Rue that you are going to ride with me; then leave her with Molly. My wife is sleeping now, but she will soon be with the girls, and you can trust Molly."

Leszinksky found Molly by his daughter's bedside, smiling down upon the child, whose hand she held. There was a faint pink tinge on Rue's pale face, and the eyes had lost their sad mistiness.

"I am going to ride with Doctor Carisbrooke, Rue. I shall leave your cousin Molly as your guardian while I am gone."

"I will take good care of her, Uncle Stan. Papa told me just what I might give her."

As Leszinksky kissed his daughter she whispered .

"I do like Molly, papa ; I did not have to try. I am so glad she is my cousin. Good-by, papa. I hope you will have a pleasant ride."

After they had left the house, and the bays were proving that they deserved the doctor's praise, he began abruptly :

"Rue is decidedly better. I think Molly will be the best physician we can call. Companionship and nature will do more for the child than drugs could. How old is Rue?"

"She was thirteen last spring."

"She is a child in years and appearance, but a woman in sorrows and intensity of feeling. Only a child can bring back her childhood and make her forget her griefs. The circle of her sympathy has been too narrow and its personality too intense. Her troubles are so near her that they seem gigantic; we must try to widen her horizon. Hers is a perfect though a delicate organism. She has unflinching self-control and the most exquisitely sensitive nerves: it is the true heroic temperament. This morning, when she told me she was trying to live for your sake, I mentally resolved that with God's blessing she

should live; for I knew she could. With her temperament and her strength of will, what she may choose is a vital question. She has no real physical disorder, but a very decided affectional and moral ailment; she has been most unhealthfully exposed to strong emotions. The cure is a natural, child-like life, where simple likings may happily take the place of her uprooted attachments. Molly's calmness and sweetness of disposition is a restful sedative for her—the best we can give her while her nerves are quivering from this recent wrench. But to be with Molly for any length of time would be a fresh injury. She would make an idol of Molly; and we must keep her from idols. If I considered Molly, for her sake I would beg you to leave Rue with us. She could only do Molly good; and Rue has captured my wife, and I think she could soon hang my scalp at her girdle."

"Nothing could be kinder, Carisbrooke, than your frankness. I am sure you would willingly do all or any one thing that would benefit Rue. Nothing is so valuable to me as your advice. I can see where I have failed to do what was best for my child. She lost so much when she lost her mother that I could not, even for her sake,

force her to further loss. And there was a more sacred consideration. The last promise I made Margaret was never to separate the child from the chief who had sacrificed all that an Indian values to save her from a death of torture."

"I think, Leszinksky, you take to yourself needless blame. I do not think under any circumstances you could have so ruled Rue's life that there would have been no strong emotions, no absorbing interests in it. The moral malady —and it is a malady—is in the blood; she had nothing from her mother except the power of loving absolutely and devotedly. From the long line of Leszinkskys she gathered her imperiousness and her unfaltering adhesion to a friend or a cause. You were modified by the Mason graft, but Rue counts no graft this side of the stern Macdonalds, except that one quality her mother's brooding love gave her. I had a long talk with Carson last night, and I cross-questioned him closely. To study this case and understand my patient I had to make a moral diagnosis of the symptoms shown in her life and character. Knowing the disease, we may find that poisons are curative. Sorrows are sometimes fevers that acclimate the soul to its residence in the flesh.

You and I both believe in a special Providence, and with that belief comes faith in the ministration of sorrow. We do not know why evil exists, but we do know that God brings good out of evil. Rue's present pain may be a safeguard for the future, a training against a time of trouble when neither you nor I could shield her. All that we can do now is to try and teach her to bear adversity as a God-sent trial of obedience."

"Where do you advise me to place her?"

"With some one who is kindly but firm; some one more just than loving. Carson told me you had determined to leave her in Oxford with his sister. What is she like?"

"She is just what you describe, and Rue likes her without being fond of her."

"Then Rue will be in good hands. But there is a husband. Who and what is he?"

"A Calvinist, an Abolitionist, and a fanatic, but honest and sincere. At least so Carson says, and Carson is the best judge of men that I know —that is, when he is unprejudiced. And I assure you that in the beginning he was not prejudiced in Mr. McCormack's favor."

"'Honest and sincere'—that sounds well.

But if he makes his *isms* personal—for instance, should he reflect upon you as a slave-holding fiend, which as a fanatic he might do—he will have a battle with Rue on the moment."

"If he is a kindly man and a man of sense he will not be likely to antagonize a child."

"To be kindly and sensible would be inconsistent with 'Calvinist, Abolitionist, and fanatic.' There is more of the diabolic than the divine in that trinity. My hope is in his wife's good qualities. But Rue must stay with us until I see that it is better she should go. You consent, do you not?"

"Yes. I thank you no less for the invitation than I do for the promise to send her to Oxford when you see that it is well she should go. Now that is settled, there is another and a very serious matter upon which I wish to consult you."

"You are not ill, Leszinksky?"

"No; it is not the doctor I wish to consult now, but the man of cool judgment and strict honor."

"Your preamble confuses me. Do I blush visibly?"

"Well, yes, I think you do; there is a modest tinge in your nose."

"Before you begin the 'serious matter' I must make a five minutes' call at this house, where I have a patient. The bays know they are to stop. Will you hold the reins until I return?"

When the doctor came back he turned his horses westward and drove out—the then favorite drive—to the Mill Creek House. Not a word was said until they were on the smooth turnpike. Leszinksky was frowning at his thoughts when the doctor reined in the bays and said:

"Now I can hear what you have to tell me. I have an hour to spare before my next visit."

Leszinksky began abruptly:

"Did Carson tell you anything of the attack upon Bouie's Hill? I do not mean the general facts; of course you know them—I told you those last night when I was telling you the causes of Rue's illness. But did Carson mention a discovery that he believed proved the attack to have been the result of criminal instigation?"

"Yes; and I could have strengthened his belief, but did not. Until last night, when Carson told this story, I had regarded as an unfounded suspicion my brother Robert's idea that the

horse which killed Tom Cartaret was accessory to a murder."

"Robert had such a suspicion?"

"Had and has. I tried to reason him out of the belief—for with him it is more than a suspicion. I did succeed in keeping him from any open expression of his opinion, but I know he is not convinced of Hartley's innocence."

"Then he suspects Hartley of guilt there?"

"I tell you he *believes* it. Hartley bought the horse in England for Tom—an English thoroughbred. He warned Tom that he was ill-tempered and unruly in the hunting-field—a warning that would have little effect with such a rider as Tom Cartaret. It was a splendid animal, easy-gaited, and with wonderful length of stride. Tom could have sold him for three times the price he gave; it was an extraordinarily low price. But that was explained by what Robert learned after Tom's death. Hartley either did not know or did not tell Tom that the brute was viciously revengeful. He had killed a groom in the stable-yard of his owner in Surrey, apparently without provocation. It was afterwards learned that the horse had refused a jump that morning which the

groom, with spur and whip, had forced him to take. He killed Tom Cartaret much the same way and for the same reason, after the hunt was over and he had dismounted in the field."

"Do you believe now that Hartley knew?"

"Frankly, I am somewhat in doubt. In a jury-box I could not conscientiously say, 'Not guilty'; my verdict would be, 'Not proven.' What do you think of the value of the man's testimony who saw Hartley's servant with the mob at Bouie's Hill? Is he a reliable witness?"

"He is an uneducated frontiersman. He was in the First Dragoons and was afterwards a scout with the regiment. He is cool in temper and judgment, slow and cautious—a simple-minded, honest, truthful, upright Christian. He was the bravest soldier, the most courageously devoted and loyal, that I ever knew. He is a cripple for life through a martyrdom he suffered to save the command from an ambush. I could not in any way doubt his word if he was sure of the miscreant's identity. But he has never said he was sure. He saw the fellow only by starlight, and was struck by a resemblance of outline and of voice which puzzled him at the time. When he recollected the resemblance afterwards he

thought it was this 'familiar' of Hartley's. But he has always insisted that there is an uncertainty in his mind as to the identity."

"But that is not all?"

"No; that is Pike's testimony. In the house where Mrs. Carson was killed her youngest son had a rifle-ball and a charge of buckshot sent through him. Stearns, another scout, a cool though desperate fighter, says that as the Big Chief fell beside him one of the attacking party in the house called out, '*He* is finished; now for that little tiger-cat beside the squaw, then our work is done.' That would seem to mean the last of the Indians; but Carson and Stearns both think that Rue was meant—that in the dim light Willy was mistaken for Rue. This is the evidence upon which they found their belief."

Leszinksky took a roughly-scrawled scrap of paper from his pocket-book and gave it to the doctor, who said:

"Carson told me of this. To him it seems conclusive. It is only part of a sentence."

"Yes; a mere fragment—a half-burned slip crushed into a newly-filled pipe. It was found in the pocket of a man the Big Chief killed.

When wounded and dying he sent his hatchet through the fellow's skull. It was Lo-loch-ta-hoo-la's last effort. If this scrap of writing means what Carson thinks, the dying Indian struck down an assailant of the child for whose sake he had given up his tribe and his place in the councils of his people."

The doctor slowly spelled out these words: "kil the injun beefour we kin git at the yung 1 u want oute ov the wai. yu aint gin me ennuf munny to git bill 2."

"Who found this?"

"Stearns. He and Carson searched every corpse that was left on the ground. I am sorry to say they killed two men after the troops got there—two who were wounded in the hall. Carson was crazed by his losses. I never knew him vindictive before."

"Not much to be wondered at when a man's wife and child are cruelly murdered. Who was the first to connect these words with intended injury to Rue?"

"Carson. The moment Pike told the story of the two men he saw and the resemblance to Hartley's servant Carson insisted he had found the key to the assault. It had been almost inex-

plicable: to come so near the fort and make such a persistent and determined attack upon a house belonging to an officer, and which they found so strongly guarded. I do not think that mob would have gone such lengths unless some sinister influence urged them on. It was proved afterward that two men had spent money without stint in furnishing whiskey to the crowd. One of these men was identified as the man killed in the hall—the fellow with this note in his pocket."

"Did Pike recognize the dead man as one of those he saw?"

"Not positively. Before he saw the corpse Pike described the person who was with the one he supposed to be Hartley's old servant as 'a black man 'most as big as me. He had a long-barrelled rifle. I could see plain the starlight a-shinin' along the barrel.'"

"Was it a good description of the dead man?"

"One of those descriptions that may be made to fit. The man measured six feet four inches —Pike is over seven feet. His face was blackened. He had only a revolver in his hand and another in his belt; but there was a long rifle in

the hall which might have been his. There is not an iota of positive proof to sustain Carson's belief. He has an old prejudice against Hartley. It would be horrible to ascribe such a crime to an innocent man. You can see how I fear catching the infection of this suspicion. I cannot banish it from my mind, and I dare not entertain it without more direct and convincing evidence."

"Carson tells me that Stearns is a very acute observer, and that Stearns believes as he does."

"Stearns is like Carson in being ready to believe any evil of Hartley. Until last night I have constantly combated Carson's suspicions, but now—"

Apparently stopping for a word, Leszinksky was silent until the doctor, as he turned his horses citywards, suggested:

"You mean that now you see differently?"

"No, not differently in the affair at Bouie's Hill—no absolute difference there—but I now know that Hartley does not stop at crime when he wishes to accomplish his object."

"What! something new since last night?"

"Yes, something new that I learned last night from an inmate of your house."

"Lucy?"

"Yes. Then you know her history?"

"Not one syllable of her past, except a theory deduced from circumstances. She came to us a waif, and she remains a mystery. Four years ago this fall I was one day at St. John's Hospital. I had a private patient there. As I was leaving I met Sister Anthony at the door. We were talking of my patient when a hollow-eyed, spectrally-thin, ill-clad woman staggered up the walk and fell senseless on the steps. Sister Anthony had her brought in, and I stopped to see what could be done. It was a case of exhaustion from fatigue and starvation. The woman had evidently made a long and weary journey on foot. I thought then that she was an escaped slave, but I have since concluded I was mistaken in that. There was something so touching in her patient and hopeless manner that it fairly haunted me. So to ease my anxiety I turned her over to my wife, although I might have known that was a sure method of perpetuating the trouble. Her recovery was slow, and she seemed to suffer from the scenes in the ward, so we brought her to the hill. I think the human interest she soon

took in the family, and grateful appreciation of my wife's care, saved her life. From the day she saw Molly she began to mend. I had studied her closely, and I found there was an apparently incurable mental trouble—not exactly insanity, but a harmless mania. I can only characterize it as an abnormal and passionately intense devotion to children, especially young girls. It was plain to me that Lucy had lost a child who if living would, I imagine, be near Rue's age. That first winter Lucy nursed Molly through a severe and dangerous attack of scarlet fever. I have never known so careful and faithful a nurse. In my wife's slight illnesses she is devoted and untiring. Now I come to the mysterious phase of Lucy. We soon found that any question concerning her past threw her into a state of great excitement, and, if incautiously continued, of agonized terror. So the past was tacitly dropped. We found her perfectly honest and trustworthy. But although unselfishly careless of sacrifice of her personal comfort, she carefully hoarded every cent that was given her. My wife built up a romance on that one inconsistent trait, and imagined that Lucy had some one near to her in great need. The sum grew

rapidly to very fair proportions. In addition to her wages presents of money were made to her. She is an excellent hair-dresser, and my wife found her a *clientèle* at the Burnet House and gave her time to attend these outside engagements. The April after she came to us she suddenly disappeared. She took nothing with her except a small parcel no larger than her ordinary daily package and her savings, which were in a little box Molly had given her. We were much distressed and made all inquiry that seemed prudent. I had not then given up my idea of her being a runaway, and I do not mind telling you that I thought I was harboring one. My wife was sure she had been a slave, brought up by a kind and lovingly careful mistress. Her manner and her affectionateness seemed to prove it. Before our inquiries were of any avail she returned as suddenly as she had disappeared. Only in place of a certain excitement of manner we had noticed just before she left there was a fixed despondency. Question of any kind brought on violent hysteria. We gave up all questioning and left her, as she seemed to prefer, free to come and go as she chose. She gradually settled into her old place in the fami-

ly, but the same history has repeated itself every year. Now tell me what has this to do with Hartley? But wait; here we are in Fourth Street, and at this house I have a call to make and another next door. Will you be good enough to drive on to the Burnet. You will find my coachman waiting there. In three-quarters of an hour I will join you in the reading-room. I am sorry I have to get out here. I acknowledge the thorns of curiosity are pricking me through and through."

Leszinksky drove on as Dr. Carisbrooke had directed. He found the coachman waiting. He went in by the Vine Street door, passed the reception-room, and at the next door he came face to face with Hartley.

CHAPTER XX.

"He waytied after no pompe ne reverence;
Ne maked him a spiced conscience,
But Cristes and his apostles twelve
He taught, and first he folwed them himselve.
. . . . . .
For such lawe as a man giveth another wight
He should himselve usen it by right."

LESZINKSKY, with Hartley in his thoughts, instantly recognized him, which, had he taken it, would have given him an advantage in the interview that was to decide the doubtful question of Hartley's guilt. If the man was innocent of the crime of which he was suspected he would be unconscious of the suspicion. The first instant of consciousness was evidence against him; for, seeing Leszinksky, he turned deathly pale. Recovering by a quick effort, he offered his hand, which offer Leszinksky ignored. Then a crimson flush eclipsed the pallor of Hartley's face.

With such testimony Carson would have essayed to force a confession, for Carson could be

pitiless. But the chivalrous delicacy of Leszinksky's nature unfitted him for the position of accuser. Not that he lacked strength or force of character, but to be a willing accuser one must be brutally aggressive, and that Leszinksky could not be. Physical courage was as much in his blood as its red corpuscles; there was no peculiar merit in its presence, although its absence would have been a defect. The moral courage that combats wrong, like all his moral qualities, even including justice, was set in the tendernesses that are born of human sympathy. There was no guilt so dark that he could not lighten it with pity. His very intolerance of evil made him compassionate of the evil-doer. He had the breadth of charity which prompted Burns to seek excuse and find hope for "cloven Clootie." Knowing Hartley guilty of a lesser crime, he hesitated to accuse him of a greater which had not been, and possibly could not be, proved. In one particular his sense of justice made him Hartley's advocate. He distrusted Carson's suspicions because of Carson's prejudice.

Thus Leszinksky lost the advantage which Hartley's confusion gave him. Yet Hartley was

not altogether the gainer by this loss. The same delicate perceptive sense of right that forbade Leszinksky's belief in unproved guilt also forbade an appearance of trust in the good faith of a man whom he suspected of a great crime, and whom he knew to be guilty of a criminal misdemeanor.

As I have said, Leszinksky refused to touch Hartley's offered hand. The loyal Christian gentleman had no arrogant self-righteousness. There was nothing in his manner that could wound even the sensitiveness of over-conscious vanity. But there was a natural quality in the manhood of the man which constrained him to carry his self-respect as reverently as Douglas carried the heart of Bruce. Hartley withdrew his extended hand. Pulling his hat over his brows until it shaded his face, where the red shame had burnt into a white heat of rage, he turned to go into the room which he had just left when Leszinksky spoke: "Major Hartley, I had intended to seek an interview with you later, but if you are disengaged now I prefer not to wait longer. Will you come with me, or, if you are alone, can I see you here?"

"This room is open at all times to our delega-

tion. If you will wait an instant at the next door I will open it. That is my private room."

"Certainly I will wait."

As Hartley passed through the committee-room Leszinksky saw, among others who were seated around a long table, the two gentlemen to whom Dr. Carisbrooke had introduced him the preceding evening. To avoid the delay which chance encounter with the doctor's friends might cause, and anxious, now that it was begun, to have this explanation, Leszinksky crossed the little space to the next door, which Hartley had indicated as his private room. Leaning against the casing, with his back to the committee-room, he waited admittance. Hartley's request had been that he should wait there; consequently he remained, although he could hear Hartley talking with some one as he walked about the room. The noise in the street, mingled with the voices, made an indistinctness of sound which was not broken except by an occasional word to which the half-unconscious listener attached no meaning. The last few sentences were spoken near the door where he waited, and the words were clear and distinct:

"Go directly to the depot. The train will not

leave before two. Wait inside for me. I will come before you leave."

Leszinksky thought he recognized the voice that answered, "Yes, sir."

At the same moment Hartley threw open the door for Leszinksky to enter; the door leading to the committee-room closed after some one who was leaving.

With a repression of embarrassment that revealed the effort at self-control, Hartley motioned Leszinksky to a seat near the window and turned to lock both doors while saying:

"As you wish to see me alone, I will prevent our being interrupted."

Leszinksky had walked on to the window. With a rapid glance he recognized the man who hurriedly ran down the steps and then up Vine Street. It was the fellow who had been Hartley's servant when he and Leszinksky were in the First Dragoons. The dark, Jewish face was so marked that recognition was easy to one who had seen him daily during his stay with the regiment at Fort Gibson.

Hartley's nervousness made the turning of a refractory lock more difficult. Before he had mastered it and could see his visitor the visitor

was seated in the chair indicated with his back to the window.

With Leszinksky's first word Hartley's expression grew confident. Before the sentence was completed he was still more at ease.

"Major Hartley, when you purchased Lucy from my wife did you not consider yourself pledged to manumit her? Did you not understand that the sale was made to you for one sole reason—that you might give your child and its mother their freedom?"

"Yes, I believe such was the understanding." The question had so completely relieved his fear of a more dangerous subject that he carelessly and half-sneeringly added: "I suppose I paid the full value of the quadroon and the child—possibly something over the market-price."

Leszinksky perfectly comprehended the changed manner. Believing that he was coming near proof that would justify Carson's charge and his own growing suspicion, he resolved to guard himself carefully from accepting the provocation which he was sure was intended. It was plain to him that Hartley wished to find cause of quarrel behind which he could intrench himself, and, in case of need, make it a defence

to more serious accusation. Very calmly he answered:

"Yes, the full value. I think all who assisted at the settlement so regarded it. My wife accepted 'something over the market-price,' because she intended it as a provision for Lucy's future. As you know, we were very poor and could have ill afforded her other assistance; yet neither of us would have consented to her leaving her home without any means of support, burdened as she was with the care of a young child, unless some provision were made. You know how small is the pay of a lieutenant; and you also know that when Miss Cartaret married me, without her guardian's consent, Judge Cartaret had the power to suspend her income until she was twenty-seven years of age. Her income was stopped. The sum was added to the Cartaret estate, to which your wife will succeed in event of my daughter dying unmarried. I know you perfectly understand this; and you also know that all Mrs. Leszinksky could do for Lucy's support was to settle upon her the money for which she was sold to the father of her child. Mr. Page thought it a generous sum that you offered. You remember you named

the sum; you knew that Mr. Page kindly took charge of it and invested it here in Cincinnati for Lucy. In the conversation I had with you—we had but one conversation on the subject, which I think was in Dr. Randall's presence—you were very grateful for what you characterized as a 'generous arrangement'; you afterwards begged Mr. Page to keep it strictly in Lucy's name, for you would 'provide for the child.'

"And I have always done so."

"Yes, I do not doubt that. But have you kept your word to me, your obligation to Lucy? Have you manumitted Lucy?"

"I gave her free papers; they were not registered, but they were valid without registration."

"Did you not hear that the papers were stolen? Did not Lucy tell you of her loss?"

"Yes; but just then there were complications that annoyed me. And the woman was obstinate. I refused to replace her papers unless she would give up the child; I wished to separate the child from her. I was determined my daughter should not be brought up as the child of a quadroon—of a slave. As you observed, she is my child. It was but natural and proper for me to consider what was best for her."

There was evidence of genuine feeling when Hartley spoke of his daughter. In the dirt with which he was trying to cover crime that one shining ray showed the presence of a lost jewel. Knowing Leszinksky as we do, it is easy to know how the discovery touched him.

"I am very ready to admit that it was not only 'natural and proper,' but your imperative duty to consider what was 'best for your daughter.' A daughter is always very dear to a father. There is no tie more purely tender. I can easily believe that it would be intensely, pitifully strong when conscience could find occasion to urge the claim of a nameless daughter. I am glad you spoke of your daughter." There was a wonderful tenderness in the accent of Leszinksky as he said:

"It is an excuse that I did not make for you. I can see how your love for her led you to a wrong, thinking it best for her. But a wrong is never the best; it is always the worst thing we can do for love's sake. It made you forget a right that was more sacred than yours—the right of the mother to her child. In such a case as Lucy's the law is more strictly just than it is to a wife who claims right of motherhood. Law is Scriptural in its dealings with the un-

wedded mother. Like the conscience of the patriarch, it recognizes the supreme right of the mother when it gives Ishmael to Hagar. You have been more pitiless than the law. You forced the child from the arms of the mother; and sent Hagar into the wilderness to die alone. Lest she should cry out in her agony, should show the world the spectacle of her bleeding heart, you *sold her as a slave.*"

The words of the inspired though unconsecrated preacher went straight through the encasing of crime that had dulled the sensibility of conscience. Starting to his feet with the sudden pain, shrinking from the steady light in the clear eyes that seemed to look with a divine compassion into the depths where the hidden guilt was uncovered, Hartley walked the floor, staring upon its sun-flecked surface, as if he found in the tracery of shadows the crimes he had committed and the crimes he had contemplated. Face to face with the evil that had lived in him, that he had nourished into life, the gigantic proportions of the monster he had invoked terrified him. Yet even in his terror he resented in a sort of dull, uninstigative anger the moral height from which Leszinksky's pity descended.

Conviction of guilt had not worked repentance ; if it had such repentance would have been short-lived. A sore must slough off its foulness. The processes of nature are slow. They are physical revelations of the divine processes which cleanse and heal a diseased moral nature.

The wise physician has learned the great lesson to wait on nature. The wise moralist will wait, while watching where he may help, for the self-effort which is the first step in the purification of a soul.

The only power which will pierce the dry rock and bring forth a living stream had found Hartley. The most humanly loving teacher of this century has well said: "Charity, having life in itself, is the opposite and destroyer of contempt as well as hatred." The lovely spirit that dwelt in the heart of the great pagan who declared that "nothing human is foreign to me," in keeping Leszinksky from expression or feeling of contempt, killed Hartley's hate. Yet the death of hate did not bring repentance, but remorse—fit companion for the great company of indwelling fiends which were gathered in the guest-chamber of the soul.

Then a tentative question was asked:

"Are you willing to do what is just?—to keep your promise and give Lucy her freedom?"

"Is she in Cincinnati?"

"Yes."

The thought flashed through Hartley's mind that as the ghost he had seen under the lamplight had proved a very real presence, there might also be danger of that other fear clothing itself in flesh and blood. With the mental reiteration of the question he had been pondering through the sleepless hours of the night, "What did they discover at Bouie's Hill?" there grew a belief that his safety in the future might depend on the mercy of the man who, in event of that discovery, would be the prosecutor of certain persons whose conviction would— He dared not pursue his own thought to its last and logical consequence. Yet out of this fear grew defiance.

Pride, which in its higher manifestation is one of the safeguards of a noble nature, is the springe which holds a criminal in the slough of crime. Pride born of self-respect is the guardian of truth. But pride which is the offspring of vanity is an instigator of lies. At its fatal touch Hartley's remorse became exasperative,

and the healing spirit of Repentance which was hovering near sorrowfully took its flight.

"I will manumit Lucy and the deed can be recorded; in addition I will double or quadruple the sum Mrs. Leszinksky settled upon her, if she will release all claim to the child."

"In plain words, you will free the mother if she will consent to sell her child. With such a condition I do not think Lucy will accept her freedom. If she refuses I shall regard it as my duty to insist upon your keeping your promise to the letter. You admit that the manumission of mother and child were the terms of their sale. You admit that you gave Lucy 'free papers,' which were either lost or stolen. I insist that you replace those papers at once and without condition. A trial of the case now and here would be a scandal that I would gladly avoid for your wife's sake. But even to save the soiling of a name allied to the unsullied name of the Cartarets I will not hold my peace in the face of an injustice like this which you have done. I insist upon its instant reparation."

"I make no condition as to Lucy's manumission. I will keep my promise. The offer of settlement was the consideration for her release

of claim to the child. I proposed it to you because Lucy would believe you, if you tell her it is in the interest of the child that I ask her relinquishment of her right."

"I am sure you need not offer her money to repay her for the loss of her child or to tempt her in its interest. You know of what avail were such offers years ago before you dared the high-handed crime of which you force me to speak. When you urged your love for your daughter I thought I saw a human motive for an inhuman wrong. I waited for you to acknowledge that wrong and offer to make what amend might yet be possible to the wronged mother. Had you made such acknowledgment and offered the one reparation she would accept—actual, personal knowledge of her child's well-being—I would have urged to her your love for the child, your wish and your ability to secure its future. Now, I ask you, what excuse have you to make to Lucy, to me, for the crime of selling her? Six years ago you sold her in Baltimore to a trader—for a small sum, it is true, but the condition you made was more to you than money. She was to be taken to the Southwest and sold to some inland planter, who was to be told that she would be

likely to run away. It seems your caution was needful. She did run away. Half insane from the loss of her child and her betrayal into slavery, suspected, watched, strong mother-love gave her the patience to wait for opportunity to escape and the endurance to thread her way through forest and swamp and the more dangerous plantations and villages until she reached Memphis and found the O'Dowds. They assisted her, out of the pitiful pittance of poverty, to reach Cincinnati. She has lived here, not daring to claim the money invested here for her, lest you should know that she had escaped the fate into which you sold her. She is living with the Carisbrookes. I do not think you will care to uncover to Robert Carisbrooke—the administrator of the estate to which your wife is next in succession should disease or some accident, *like the one at Bouie's Hill*, remove my daughter—or to Dr. Carisbrooke the crime you committed when you sold a free woman into slavery. Again I ask, what excuse, what reparation, will you make to Lucy?"

"I will do all you ask." The answer was acquiescent; the look was that of a tiger at bay.

"Very well; I will have the papers prepared

and will see you to-morrow. When this affair is ended I have a caution to give you. I will tell it you to-morrow. Is your wife with you in Cincinnati?"

"Yes; and my sister, Mrs. Cartaret." He slightly accented the "Cartaret." "They are in the house now. Will you see them?"

"I will call on them to-morrow when I bring you the papers. I am as anxious to spare them any knowledge of all this as you could be. The Cartaret name, Margaret's relatives, are very dear to me. I am with my daughter at Dr. Carisbrooke's. If they know the Carisbrookes it will be a needful courtesy for me to call on Judge Cartaret's widow and daughter."

"They do know the Carisbrookes. Mrs. Hartley and Mrs. Cartaret are to take luncheon there to-day."

"Are you coming?"

"No."

"It will probably be best for you to come. I am willing, for the sake of the Cartarets, to help you outlive faults and live down suspicions. It is more necessary than you know for me to accord you public recognition, though I tell you frankly that until I believe such suspicions ut-

terly false and baseless I cannot give my hand to you in friendship."

"I know. 'The hand of Douglas is his own.' A Christian must be scrupulous in his recognitions."

In extremest danger Hartley could not restrain a sneer. And he knew now from that mention of the *accident* at Bouie's Hill that the danger was extreme. Leszinksky's manner and words had given him assurance of Leszinksky's silence, at least until suspicion should be certainty. But then there was also in the words an intimation of danger, of necessity for caution. Because of this intimation, and the assurance it gave of Leszinksky's silence, it was safe to give the rein to rage, which sought outlet in a sneer and a taunt. The answer was simply and calmly spoken: "A loyal clasp of the hand is the seal of friendship. I cannot give such greeting to a man whose honor I doubt. But I promise you a courtesy that will pass current with the world. That much I do for your wife and your sister. Anything more will wait a pending verdict." There was a flash in the gray eyes like sunlight upon steel, and Hartley, warned into a semblance of respectful courtesy, opened the door and bowed out his unwelcome visitor.

CHAPTER XXI.

"Shame is a shadow cast by sin; yet shame
Itself may be a glory and a grace
Refashioning the sin-disfashioned face."

ALL of Mrs. Carisbrooke's guests had arrived punctually except Hartley. Grandison and Horry brought his apology for "an unavoidable detention."

At the luncheon-table there was again mention of his absence and further explanation: "An effort is being made to adjust the claims of the New York rival delegations. Seymour and Tilden have arranged a meeting of the 'Hards' and the 'Softs.' It is hoped a compromise may be effected."

Then, with Mrs. Carisbrooke's questioning as excuse, the conversation drifted, as all conversation did this week in Cincinnati, into politics. Grandison, an optimist, believed "the New York deadlock a mere State quarrel which will be harmonized by the necessity of union in face of the enemy. The Presidential election and its impor-

tance to the Democracy will force the factions to yield to reason."

Dr. Carisbrooke. "As if factions ever regarded reason!"

Horry. "The revolution already begun in the two great parties will not go backward. Look at the bitter fight in the broken fragments of the Whig party. See how they hate each other in the antagonistic positions they have assumed as 'Know-Nothings' and 'Black Republicans.' The small element of decency which is left claims to be a National Union party. In plain words, they are Federalists. They have never cordially surrendered the monarchical principle, and they hate democracy with the bitter hate of —women." A smile and a bow to the hostess made this a challenge, but before it was taken up he continued: "These broken fragments will die in convulsions, but they will be fruitful. The progeny of the dragon's-teeth will fill the land."

Colonel Roane. "What harm can they do a solid democracy? *There* is a Saint George for your dragon."

Horry. "Hear me out, O mildest and suavest of Arkansians! Your solid democracy is a pretence. It is a lion's skin covering not one but

many asses. In the beginning of the republic it was a solid fallacy ; now it is a disintegrated delusion."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Mr. Horry, you are talking treason."

Horry. "Which statement, madam, is another proof of the false quality of the principle you worship as divine. In a pure democracy treason cannot exist, either in speech or in the feeling that presupposes speech ; for in a pure democracy equality is perfect, and so speech would always be free. Since the reign of our George I., of bumptious temper and doubtful—well, I will not enumerate all his public and private virtues,—since that august personage took his place in history as ruler of a nation made up of sovereign States we have had an oligarchical republic of confederate States, which is not a democracy. Pardon! Madam, I crave your patience ; I beg leave to make my saying plain and coherent. We have a Democratic party which is falsely named. It does in a measure represent several dependencies of the democratic principle, but the principle is slowly dying beneath the superimposed fictions. Because of the weight it carries this party is also breaking in twain.

If the break could release and save the imprisoned principle it would be a fortunate issue. But I fear the division will only loosen the evils that are inherent in its organization."

Grandison. "Forgive his raving, Mrs. Carisbrooke; he is mad. He has been bitten by the French Socialists. He blasphemes, but he is not responsible for the blasphemy."

Horry. "They are the words of truth and soberness. I am not mad, most noble Festus. It is simply this world of ours, which is given to lying and to hugging its delusions. There is that within me unsaid which is worse."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Then say it. I had rather know the worst than to be threatened with untold horrors."

Horry. "My dear Madam Eve! You ask for the apple, and you shall have it. I warn you that it is sour and rotten at the core. It is, moreover, a very apple of discord. When it is gathered the gates of paradise will close and a flaming sword will bar the entrance."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "It cannot be worse than your threats. Go on."

Horry. "You have spoken, and I live but to obey your sex. If you rue the opening of this

Pandora's box of politics—shake not your curls at me ; thou canst not say I did it. I speak at your order, and I bespeak your attention.

"This bad blood in the two great parties would work itself out in boils which would be sore to the touch, but would clear the political system of humors, were it not for the growing discord of States. Unfortunately, sectional animosity is dividing the country with a geographical line which will practically separate us into two distinct communities or peoples. They are already opposed in principles and interests, alienated in feeling, and jealous of supremacy in the federal relation, which has lost its protective and friendly significance. The disruption of the Whig party, which is an accomplished fact, and the disruption of the Democratic party, which is signalled by these rival delegations, uncovers a political North and a political South tired of the compact that united them in a common federal bond, and ready to divide upon the line recognized in the framework of the Constitution."

Grandison. "There is no provision in the Constitution for division of the Union."

Horry. "I beg your pardon, most learned expounder of the law. But there was such a pro-

vision made not only by the convention which formed the Constitution, but by the State conventions which ratified it. The Constitution was in the beginning a compromise between sections. It is now an obsolete treaty between two nations of opposite civilizations. In 1814 the Hartford Convention did not regard the Constitution as a sacred instrument; else why did they cry out for a change in the basis of representation? Neither did Massachusetts regard the Constitution as the ark of liberty. Four times has she threatened secession: first, with reference to the adjustment of the State debts; secondly, on account of the Louisiana purchase; thirdly, because of the war of 1812–14, when, as Jefferson said, 'four of the Eastern States are only attached to the Union like so many inanimate bodies to living men'; fourthly, upon the annexation of Texas, when her Legislature resolved in advance that such annexation would be good cause for the dissolution of the Union."

Grandison. "But you will admit, Horry, that the question of secession was always distasteful to the majority in those States."

Horry. "What was distasteful is not the question. We are looking at what was pro-

posed, to prove how the Constitution was understood. Thus far the conservatism of the country, which always argues against change and for delay, has kept the compact intact. But what will conservatism do against the interest of the majority? There are commercial questions—underlying pocket-questions—in the minds of the agitators which will make them take the most plausible pretext for separation. Possibly the tariff, which is certainly unjust to the South and hurtful to the West, may furnish excuse. Possibly slavery, which just now seems to come uppermost in the quarrel, may be the pretext. Is it true, Roane, that the split in the Missouri delegation is on the slavery question?"

The Arkansian. "I fear it is undeniably true."

Horry. "So; it was the roughs of the Anti-Slavery wing that tried this morning to fight their way into the Convention at the edge of the bowie-knife and the point of the pistol. I wonder what 'Northern indignation' will say to that?"

Dr. Carisbrooke. "To quote the *Tribune*, 'Northern indignation is a very uncertain force; it comes in gusts, is powerful for the time, but

soon subsides. The cares of the world and the temptation of the devil consume it after a little.' "

Horry. "And now the devil will strongly tempt them to approve bowie-knives and revolvers."

Grandison. "Roane, is the Price who led this onset upon the convention the man I saw talking with Benton?"

Roane. "Yes, the same 'splendidly handsome fellow.' Has your admiration cooled at the picture of the raider and his following with their bowie-knives and revolvers?"

Grandison. "Not at all. He looks every inch a soldier, a born leader of men."

Roane. "I should think the *Tribune* would be charmed with this last exploit of Price. It counsels the opponents of slavery to 'get possession of the government'; says the 'President should be a man of iron nerve'; and insists that 'fighting men are wanted as national representatives.' I should think Price would suit them in either capacity."

Dr. Carisbrooke. "I did not think Price an Abolitionist. The Virginia Prices did not even lean toward emancipation."

Roane. "Price is not an Abolitionist, although he is a Bentonite. He has too much common sense. He is too well-principled and honest to fly headlong in the face of facts that confront him every day. A Southerner may be an emancipationist, but if he professes abolitionism he is either a fool or a knave. It is easy to preach philanthropy, but under the stress of adverse circumstance it is rather difficult to practise what one may have preached. Now, I do not hesitate to say that I think slavery the curse of the South. But I am not ready to lose my all, or to ruin the fortunes of my friends and kill the present prosperity of my section, by a sudden and quixotic effort to elevate the African at the expense of the Caucasian. New England did no such thing. She stands now and mocks us with her virtues; but they put money in her pocket. Slavery was unprofitable in the North, and when they decided for emancipation it was so gradual that when the time came for freedom there were comparatively few slaves to profit by the act. They had either died with most frightful rapidity, or they had been sold in the markets of Baltimore and Richmond. You can judge which is the more probable. It is a sig-

nificant fact that during the period of delay—of apprenticeship for freedom—there was a plethora of able-bodied young negroes in the border States' markets. But I am not often tempted into even a remote discussion of a question where my interest and my sentiment—to put it mildly—pull in opposite directions."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Is Benton an emancipationist?"

Roane. "No, madam; he is simply a demagogue. He is coquetting with the Free Soil party. When the alliance is ratified it will be for a consideration. There will be ante-nuptial settlements."

Horry. "Which will assuredly be to Benton's advantage. When the crash comes any Southern renegade who affiliates with the North will put money in his purse."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "You will persist in prophecy. Do you see the crash so near?"

Horry. "Yes, madam; the Ides of March will see the incoming of the President we nominate in Cincinnati this week. But after that inauguration—the deluge."

There was a general laugh at the mock-heroic strain in which this was declaimed; then the

talk broke into fragmentary dialogues—into those airy nothings, those brilliant coruscations of complimentary small-talk, that men of sense offer women of brains as current society coin.

The guests were seated in that sensible French fashion which completes the magnetic chain and puts every one at ease. At Mrs. Carisbrooke's right was her friend and ally, the cynically prophetic Horry; at her left the Arkansian, who had laid aside his dialect with his bowie-knife when he quitted the hot, dusty town, where the convention was cooling itself with "cobblers." Opposite these two, in the places of honor beside the doctor, were Mrs. Cartaret and Mrs. Hartley; next to the last Leszinksky; at Mrs. Cartaret's right was Grandison. These four of the guests who were staying in the house completed the circle to the Arkansian. From Leszinksky to Horry the chain was broken by two empty chairs. But as the fruit was served Molly came in and took the seat next Leszinksky at the end of the table.

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "O Molly! Molly! to think that you should be the usher of ill-fortune. Why, child, you are the fatal thirteenth at table!"

Doctor Carisbrooke. "Do not let exclamation-points frighten you, my Molly. Though you brought all the Furies in your train, yet are you welcome. Stay where you are and smile down your mother's superstition."

Molly. "Thanks, papa; but I dare not vex the *mater*." And she pushed back her chair and went and stood by her mother. Whereupon Horry turned sidewise and held up a plate heaped with lucent grapes to tempt her.

Horry. "An angel comes to visit us and she is banished! Most cruel of mothers, may she not be fed?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Yes, when time, place, and numbers are propitious. If you are willing to sacrifice yourself for the general good you can go with Molly to her reception-room under the leaves."

Horry. "With the grapes?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "With all the fruit you care to take or that Molly cares to eat. Having forced that horrid sour apple upon me in the beginning of luncheon, you have grown amiable. Your chronic anger modified, you are ready to feed Molly with sweets."

Horry. "I wonder you did not say that I am

mollified; you are quite capable of such an atrocity. Madam, I leave you to your regrets; I am going to paradise with the angel you refused to entertain."

The banished pair left the dining-room, and the rippling sound of sweet girl-laughter coming from the piazza proved the companionableness of the kindly cynic. The doctor, slightly chafed at the child's dismissal, proposed an adjournment "to the paradise without," and thither they all went with plates and baskets of fruit.

A neighbor was sitting on the steps with Horry and Molly; so, without fear of the fatal number, the feast ended.

Leszinksky, introduced by the doctor as her attendant at table, had taken Mrs. Hartley in to luncheon; there they had been interested and attentive listeners rather than participants in the discursive conversation, rarely speaking to each other, except in the monosyllabic talk of table courtesy.

Leszinksky's chief interest in his beautiful neighbor was through her relationship to the wife, ever beloved, of his youth. He watched for some family trait, some likeness to the woman who had made the only happiness of his

life. But as yet he had seen nothing of Margaret in the cold, proud, beautiful face of her cousin. Out on the steps, at the end of the piazza, where they were seated somewhat apart from the gay party, he tried to interest her, to change the expression of the "icily-regular, dead perfection" of her face by talk of her childhood and her home; he wished to elicit a likeness which he knew would be painfully sweet to him. The result was such a disappointment that the change in his own face could have been read by the veriest tyro that ever tried to decipher a human countenance. A half-restrained sigh gave the change double meaning. For the first time the lovely face softened into sympathetic expression. As he caught the coming light in the large, dark eyes, these words were the first voluntary utterance of the rich, low voice:

"I am not at all like my cousin Margaret. I remember her perfectly. She had the sweetest face I ever saw."

"Ah! I see a likeness now."

There was no intention of compliment. She knew there was not. Yet of all the fine things ever said to her of her beauty nothing had ever so touched her. For the first time in all the long

years since the hardening process had begun, her heart went out in sympathy to the sentiment of love. She made no revolt to the unaccustomed feeling; but, growing more and more tender, the lovely eyes looked at him through tears that gathered slowly and fell unnoticed by her as she bent from the step above him waiting—for nothing that she could have put into words. In truth, the feeling could not have shaped itself into thought. It was simply a heaven-sent contradiction of everything in her life, or rather a divine touch that awakened her from spiritual death. There was no actual thought, but there was a blissful consciousness that love was not all a lie. Then, as consciousness grew fuller and more perfect, she knew, not through the intelligence but through feeling, that love, being love, is truth.

The man there before her, her cousin's husband, had loved her cousin truly. She remembered the sacrifices their love had cost. She also remembered and understood her father's expression of regret for his harshness to "the gentleman who had married his ward." He had said it to her the morning before they heard of Tom's death, the morning before her father's

death: his death—and hers! Yes, she had died then; at least her soul must have shut itself in some inner chamber with her sorrow. Since then she had existed physically and mentally, but she had always known that the motive-spring of life was gone.

Love's first miracle was to take up her thought just where it had stopped that snowy morning at Oakhill, when the sense of her loss so magnified the sense of self that, in her pain and wretchedness, and anger with her husband, all feeling crystallized into hate. Again the phrase struck her: "The gentleman who married my ward." Her father had been speaking of the Leszinkskys and of her husband when he said it. It had come through talk of *that woman*. Thought was growing definite now, and she wondered how she could have been so pitiless to Lucy—how she could have cared. Alas! alas! that Eros and Anteros should both exist, that the false should ever come before the true. She knew already that she had never loved her husband. Now she became conscious of love's worth, and her face crimsoned as she bent over the grape-leaves that she broke from the vine, and with which she tried vainly to hide her tears.

"The gentleman who married—" The words rang in a refrain through her ears. "Well, he is a gentleman." In her thought she said that now. And then thought went on to compare Leszinksky with that other man who, her father had said, "was not a gentleman." The proof of the fitness of the word gentleman came to her, if proof had been needed, when Leszinksky ran up the steps and returned with an umbrella, which he opened and gave her to shield her from the sun and from sight. He waited silently beside her; then, as footsteps sounded on the piazza above, he said:

"A walk will do you good. The lane is cool and shady. Will you come?"

Together they walked down the path, through the gate, and on under the sheltering shade of the trees.

The height of his companion, the fall of her shapely shoulders, the rounded outline of the drooping, oval face indistinctly seen under the shade of the umbrella she carried, a certain dainty, assured grace in her stately carriage—all reminded Leszinksky of Margaret. They had turned from the lane, through which occasional carriages were passing, into a winding country

road, and then into a silent and lonely path along the line of hills which, in the rare openings, gave a distant view of the Ohio with its glassy surface yellowed in the sunlight. Thinking of Margaret, Leszinksky had walked on unconscious of time and distance, hearing no sound in the quiet of the hot summer afternoon save the fluttering of birds in the low boughs that bent over them and the musical rhythm of the steps that kept time together.

Both were quieted and soothed into forgetfulness of the grief and pain that waited their awakening from this dream of green leaves and musical paces by the magical influence that dwells in summer woods, which lives in the fulness of life that pervades glade and dingle, in the fluttering of insect-wings about the fairy moss-stems, in the joy of each tiny wild thing, in the quivering delight of every upcurling tendril, of every blade of grass and bloom of wild-flower that stretched its opening leaves sunward.

A distant shot which echoed through the wood, and the cry of a wounded bird as it fell in the path, broke the charm.

With one impulse both stooped. Leszinksky, yielding the right of succor to his companion,

folded the umbrella she had dropped and waited her pleasure.

Kate (as she softens into womanliness I forget Mrs. Hartley and remember the Kate I found at Oakhill) held the bird in her ungloved hand. Crimson drops had fallen upon her white dress, and there was a crimson stain upon the hand she held out to Leszinksky.

"See how it bleeds, poor little thing! Will it die?"

"It is dying now."

And he took it from her unresistant hand and laid it above the path upon a mossy bank which partly covered the twisted roots of a giant oak. She sat down on the bank and watched the bird; and as the robin, with a fluttering spasm of pain, turned its breast to the sky and was still, her tearful mood came back. Only now with the showery tears there were quick, broken sighs, like the sobbing of a grieved child.

They were near the crossing of a little stream which issued from some spring hidden in the hills. Leszinksky wetted his handkerchief and wiped the stains from her hands, she looking pitifully the while from them to the dead robin. Then he brought her some water in a leafy cup,

saying: "If you will bathe your face you will be better."

Meekly she held out her hands and obeyed him, drying her face with her handkerchief. Then, standing up, she said softly—there was yet a sound of tears in her voice:

"Would you mind burying the poor little thing? I do not wish to leave it here like this."

"It is just what I intended to do with these leaves."

And gently taking up the moss, he made a narrow bed in the curve of a gnarled root, and, wrapping the bird in the wet leaves, he filled in the space and replaced the moss.

She, standing watching and wondering, dividing her pity between the bird and the one-armed gentleman, whose careful, tender movement of leaf and bird amazed her. Years ago she remembered something like this when she and Tom had buried a mocking-bird which Tom had caught and tamed for her. But Tom's tenderness had been for her, not for the bird; his care for that was a concession to her.

But this gentleman—in her thought she constantly so called him—put love into the task he had given himself.

She did not forget what he had said he intended to do with the leaves. That he had not gathered them for her use alone did not altogether please her. But that he had told her frankly of his purpose did please her. She had been living in an atmosphere of lies and hate. That she esteemed tenderness and truth, and the speaker of truth, proved that there was yet in her a healthful moral nature which would recover from the malarial taint, if the conditions were changed.

As Leszinksky finished his task Kate again sat down upon the bank. He asked, "Are you tired?"

"Yes. But it is not for that I am resting here. It is that I wish to tell you something, to ask you something."

She had decided, with the quick impulse of woman, to give him confidence and ask advice. But the manner of her preface was a step out of the false toward the true. She had put aside the courteous deceits of the world bravely, although somewhat rudely, which in a well-bred woman proved what the effort cost. Holding her courage in both hands, she plunged into question:

"Did you not sell Mr. Hartley a woman called Lucy and her child?"

A man of the world would have been astounded at the question. A *roué* would have quickly begun to reckon the chances it might give. The Christian gentleman, with quick sympathy yet truest speech, answered simply:

"She was Margaret's maid. Margaret sold her to Captain Hartley because of her child."

"If the woman had suffered a great wrong, a great injustice, would you not right it, would you not protect her?"

"Certainly. It would be my duty."

"Well, then, it is your duty, and it is also mine, for it was because of me that this wrong was done. I knew of the injustice and was silent. But I did not know until to-day that there was a crime back of the injustice. This morning the woman Lucy was in my room with my maid. I was in Julia's room, which adjoins mine. Julia had gone down to see some visitors. The door was open between the rooms. I heard a woman shriek, and I found Lucy in a strange hysterical fit. Rose was frightened, and she told me she had just given the woman her free papers —papers that Rose had found at Oakhill in a lit-

tle satchel six years ago. Do you understand the crime? Do you understand that Mr. Hartley sold the woman after she lost the free papers he had given her?"

"Yes, I understand. But will you believe what I may tell you?"

"I know you are a gentleman. I will believe anything you say. I am sure a falsehood never soiled your lips. I could not say that for myself." And there was a mournful tone in those last words of that sweet, low voice that made quick way to the heart of the listener.

"On my honor I believe there is excuse for your husband. I do not mean in the act—that was wrong. But we should forgive him for the motive. It was strong and it was human."

"You mean for my sake he did it. You are mistaken in that. He did not sell her for my sake. He simply wished to be rid of her. Please do not speak of him as my husband. There is no longer any real marriage tie between us. There is only a lying appearance. My father was going to take me from him; but my father died, and Tom was dead. I had no one I cared for but Julia, and Julia held me by a promise I

had made before my baby died." And the voice broke.

"You have lost a child; you know what it is to love a child? Then you can learn to excuse Captain Hartley. He sold Lucy because she would not give up her right to his child."

"Yes, I knew it was his child. I knew it when I insisted, as one condition of my return to Oakhill, that Lucy and the child should be sent away."

"You were right in that. You need not blame yourself for that."

"But I knew he separated that mother from her child. I knew he had bought her, and I knew he had sold her. I was *glad* she was punished." She hid her face in her hands.

Leszinksky was silent. With all pity for her he could not excuse her to herself. At last, when the sweet face was suddenly lifted to him, pale with shame and suffering, he prevented her speech by saying:

"But now you are sorry. And to-day, when you found what great injustice Lucy had suffered, you forgave her for pity's sake. To put yourself right with God and your conscience you resolved to defend her. It was not needed;

for I knew the wrong, and Captain Hartley had promised me to right it. To-morrow he was to replace the lost papers. Knowing his motive, and that he was about to repair the wrong, can you not forgive him?"

She stood up before him. She was deathly pale, but the scornful lines were deepening at the corners of the beautiful lips, and there was a set, hard look of resolve that seemed painfully unnatural in the lovely face.

"You do not know what you ask. You cannot judge for me, because you do not know what I have endured. Not for love's sake! Ah! if there had been love I could have forgiven *even that blow.*"

The gentleman standing there listening to her trembled like some one in an ague-fit. He was pale to the very lips. After a moment's pause he said:

"You are the nearest living relative of my daughter; you are Rue's heiress; and so, as your father and your brother are dead, you are my ward. I am as ready to defend you, to right your wrong, as I would be to defend my daughter. I do not believe that the marriage tie may be broken though one suffer a wrong. But sepa-

ration from an evil-doer is righteous and just. If you will accept my protection I offer you a child's place in my household and in my regard."

All her pride was gone. He was looking upon the sweetest, the tenderest, the most loving face that ever met the eyes of man. Her swaying form seemed to bend before him, that she might look upward as one would look at a messenger of the gods.

"I have been separated from Mr. Hartley ever since my father's death. I live with Julia, and so the concealment of our separation is possible. For some reason he seems to value my life and this appearance of marriage. But it is not because of him or of Julia that I refuse your protection. There is no outward, no personal, danger in my life now that demands change. I can and do rule the manner of it as I choose. Yet none the less do I thank you. The memory of this offer, the consciousness that I could, if need were, find a place in your home, in your life, will be both sweet and strengthening in the new life which begins for me from to-day. To you I owe this change which is from within. But, with you, in unlearning hate I might learn another, a more dangerous, lesson.

"The truth should not offend. This truth that I show you is the highest and the purest which has ever come into my life. To be cared for by you, to depend on your protection, to have the humblest place in your regard, is so sweet, even in thought, that I dare not accept it. Will you pardon me if I have said too much? But I could not keep back this new feeling which has come into my life."

The lovely head bent in reverent lowliness, and before he could prevent her she had taken his solitary hand in her soft palms and covered it with kisses. Then as suddenly she turned, and, walking rapidly, led the way out of the wood. In the road he offered his arm, which she accepted; but the silence was unbroken except by the fluttering birds and the regular rhythm of steps in the leafy lane.

BOOK SECOND.

PART SECOND.

"KING STAN."

"*Selfless man*
And stainless gentleman."

CHAPTER XXII.

"Of all the battayles and encounteryngs that I have made mencion of here before in all this hystory, great or smalle, this battayle that I treat of nowe was one of the sorest and best foughten."

(SCENE.—*The breakfast-room of a handsome residence in Washington.* MRS. CARISBROOKE *and* MRS. HARTLEY, *meeting in the hall, enter together.*)

"I TRUST you are somewhat rested, Mrs. Carisbrooke. Julia and I waited up until one o'clock. Then we had a message from Mr. Hartley saying the train was delayed, but that he would wait at the station."

"Yes; he was in the car before I knew the

train had stopped. Molly was so sleepy and I so tired that it was a great relief to hand over checks and parcels to a courteous and able-bodied protector. I have rarely travelled without Carisbrooke. When I do I always have reason to recant every declaration of feminine independence I have ever uttered. I don't mind confessing to you, Kate, that a masterful man is not a person to be despised in a railroad smash."

"Did you have an accident? Mr. Hartley only said a delay."

"An accident! We barely missed running at full speed into a wrecked freight-train. We escaped a collision, but we were detained three hours. What a fright Carisbrooke will have when he hears how his household goddesses were risked! Captain Hartley telegraphed Carisbrooke of our safe arrival. He will probably get the despatch before he sees the morning papers. They are very prompt in the delivery of missives at the New York Hotel."

"Will Molly breakfast with us?"

"No. I promised Molly last night to make her excuses. She is still sleeping. She was out until three o'clock the night before we left West Point, which, with the early start to New York

and the busy day there, axed her strength to nearly its last point of endurance. She sat with apparently calm nerves and a most provokingly placid expression through the first of the three hours at the wreck, and then—she slept. Imagine my temper! Fortunately she was consciously awake when we got here; so I had opportunity to expend my indignation upon her and my commiseration upon my spine before she said 'Good-night,' which was all she said to either indignation or commiseration."

During Mrs. Carisbrooke's monologue Kate had poured the coffee and dismissed the attentive "Yellowplush" to his place in the council of the *Vehmgericht* below stairs.

The two ladies lingered at table. As their talk will tell something of the four years that have passed since we left the chief personages of this drama in Cincinnati, I shall use it to bridge the gap in their history.

Kate. "And I have to make Julia's excuses. She had an engagement to meet a New York yachting party this morning in Alexandria. As they came there for her, she could not well disappoint them. She is going with them to Mount Vernon, but hopes to be back to-morrow. It is

a beautiful morning. Would you like to drive to the Capitol at twelve? The Baltimore Convention has depleted the galleries and they will not be uncomfortably crowded. Or shall we wait until after luncheon? Possibly Molly would like to go."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "My spine is my majority, and it says 'Wait.' And I have chapters to tell you and—unaccountable fact—questions to ask."

Kate. "I shall be delighted to listen to your chapters."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "And you will parry the questions? Well, I am amiable this morning, and will generously give unto you knowledge. It was rather queer, Kate, that the two letters of mine which never reached you were peculiarly news-letters. No reply coming to either, I wrote Robert Carisbrooke to question you and cross-question your post officials—which he did effectually. I believe no letters are missing since then?"

Kate. "None. Possibly the numbering system you adopted charmed the post into regularity. But I have had very little news in the later letters. Why did you not repeat the lost chapters?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "It might again have been love's labor lost. They were full, voluminous despatches. I could not duplicate the work. So, as I knew the news would keep, I waited to tell it you."

Kate. "And now, first?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Well, first the news that is of deepest interest and gravest import to the Carisbrookes. In one of the lost letters I hinted, in a sort of prophetic rage, that our very dear and generous friend Major Carson was evincing a certain willingness to be consoled for what I had stupidly believed was his never-to-be-forgotten matrimonial loss."

Kate. "You mean Molly?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "How did you hear it?"

Kate. "I have heard nothing, except, of course, that his son was in Cincinnati. You hinted just now his readiness to be consoled, and knowing that he was often with you, and thinking of the infallible recipe, 'propinquity and opportunity,' I knew it must be Molly."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Natural enough, I admit, for him to think of Molly. But for Molly to accept an old, battered, red-headed, army fossil, whose sole fortune is his pay and his half-

breed heir-apparent, is preposterous. And Carisbrooke! Do you not think Carisbrooke has taken leave of that small modicum of sense and judgment he certainly did display when he married me, to aid and abet his only child in this ruinous folly?"

Kate. "You do not believe it folly, nor do you believe it ruinous to give odds for love's sake."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Oh! ho! A b-e-a-u-ti ful sentiment!—very lovely in the mouth of an heiress who married a New York Crœsus. In an elegant home with superb appointments, talking across a service of solid silver in a breakfast-room where Landseer's hounds look longingly across twenty velveted feet of distance at Beard's squirrels, such a sentiment does you credit, my dear."

Kate. "Better a crust of bread where love is than the splendor of a king where love is not."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "The play brightens! Sentiment grows epigrammatically sententious! I am lost in admiration. But, an thou lovest me, Kate, pose your splendor and not your sentiment at Molly. Give me your epigrams, but give her advice coined by judgment."

Kate. "I could say nothing to her, except to warn her to be sure that her love is strong enough to bear sorrow, and true enough to overcome the world and the flesh—"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "—And the devil. A very pretty finish you make of it—calling me names, Kate! I vow—I would like to swear, but, being a coward and a poor, broken-spirited, helpless little woman, I won't—I do vow you are worse than Carisbrooke. That he, being a man, should find Major Carson furnished with attractions to win a girl and heroic virtues to rivet her regard is not utterly absurd. But that you, Kate —you—should see the graces of a gallant or the qualities of a lover in that rugged army fiend is incomprehensible."

Kate. "Am I so destitute of discernment or of heart that I would rate lightly a brave and loyal gentleman?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "You were the daughter of the proudest aristocrat in Virginia, and this man is a nobody, a man of the people, a 'mud-sill.' 'I thank thee (senator) for teaching me that word.' You cannot think him a fit match for a gentlewoman. You are the wife of an accomplished man of the world. That your hus-

band is immensely rich is the least of his advantages. He has influence, position. He is a leader in his State, and the trusted representative of its interests in the councils of the nation. When you preach from the text, 'All for love, or the world well lost,' it is simply the fatuous thought of the landsman who stands upon the shore of a dangerous coast and shrouds the warning pharos that he may see the lightning play with the white wings of the storm-driven ships."

Kate. "You mistake: it is the cry of a shipwrecked wretch who was driven by merciless waves where there was no warning light. Mrs. Carisbrooke, save your child from chance of such disaster. It would be better, far better, that she should die now, in her springtime of hope and youth, than that she should give up the true heart of an honest man who has won her love. Ah! my friend, the lines have been cast for you in very pleasant places. You have been sheltered in the heart of a true and faithful guardian. Do not take the bread of life from Molly to give her the gilded apples of Sodom. Believe me, the ashes are bitter, very bitter, when one is an hungered and athirst."

She had risen from the table and had come to the side of her friend. She knelt beside the little lady, and, putting her arms about her, said pleadingly: "You know Dr. Carisbrooke's judgment can be trusted. You will give your Molly where she has given her heart?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "O Kate! My beautiful, proud Kate! I did not know. I would not believe—"

Kate. "Please do not say it. I have given you warning. Because of my pride I have hidden a wound. I was taught, by one sent of God, to purify my pride. I am learning the law of duty. But hope is gone, and sometimes resolution fails. The apples are very bitter. You will please not speak your thought, your loving sympathy. I know it is coming in a full current. But I tell you that will hurt. We will simply never speak again of my mistake. But you will be good to Molly. You will not bar her way to happiness."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "I will not say her nay, my Kate. It is Carisbrooke's place to decide, not mine. He may take the responsibility on his broad shoulders; I will not assume the red-headed future, Kate." There was a tinge of

bitterness in her laugh which spoilt its natural mirthfulness.

Mrs. Hartley led the way into the cool conservatory, and, seated under the pink boughs of a feathery crape-myrtle, their confidential talk went on.

Kate. "Were not the Leszinkskys with you at West Point?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Yes. Major Leszinksky has resigned. They are going to live at 'The Cedars.' But I suppose you know all that."

Kate. "No, I had not heard. Julia and I were at Oakhill for a few weeks this spring—the only time we have been out of Washington since our return from Paris in January. I wrote to Rue inviting her to go with us for her Easter holidays, but she declined. She has always declined my invitations. This coolness, which I do not understand, grieves me. I am her nearest relative, and I would like to know her well—to be friends with my cousin Margaret's daughter. Do you know any reason why she should not visit me?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "None why she should not visit *you*."

Kate. "Your accented 'you' implies objection elsewhere."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "There is objection. Rue, who is intolerant of all other control, obeys her father's slightest expression of desire, and her father has very strongly expressed his unwillingness for her to know Captain Hartley or visit his house. Rue told me, at the same time she told me of her father's wish, that she and her father regretted the necessity which separated her from 'her dear cousin Kate.' I believe there is some old difficulty between the Leszinkskys and Captain Hartley—some frontier grudge. Carisbrooke knows it all; but Carisbrooke keeps his friends' secrets in some private corner of his inscrutable understanding. Everybody confides in Carisbrooke, and he locks up the confidences. The atmosphere of our home on the hill is dense with hidden mysteries, and I assure you that I cannot lay eyes on a key to any one of their closets. Skeletons, my dear—skeletons in every one of them. Whatever this affair is, the charming red-topped aspirant for the vacant situation of son-in-law to the Carisbrookes is a very potent influence in the matter. I did not mean to tell you. In fact, Carisbrooke

warned me not to tell it; but you may as well know it all. This swaggering dragoon, this scarlet-poll, whose candidature you have so urged, my dear, declines to visit Molly while she is a visitor here. If I had not promised you before I would have accepted your invitation after I knew that fact. In truth, I would have begged for the invitation. It seems he had some personal collision with Captain Hartley the last day of the convention in Cincinnati in 1856. I never could get the facts from my imperial mystery-keeper; but I know there was talk of a duel. For twenty-four hours there were constant pow-wows in Carisbrooke's sanctum. He and Major Leszinksky at last succeeded in cooling my Hotspur of a son-in-law-that-is-to-be."

Kate. "Are you sure it was Major Carson's own quarrel?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Whose else could it be?"

Kate. "Major Leszinksky's. I know he called Mr. Hartley to account for bad faith in selling a slave Mr. Hartley bought from my cousin Margaret."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Ah! I see, I see. Why, Kate, you have opened one of the closets. The very mystery of all others Carisbrooke has most

closely guarded is no longer a mystery. I think you saw the quadroon Lucy when you were with us. She nursed Rue through that illness of the child's, which was the result of the excitement and exposure in the affair at Bouie's Hill when Mrs. Carson was killed. I remember now that there was a registration of free papers. I know I thought it rather queer that Mr. Horry and Major Leszinksky went with Carisbrooke and Lucy to Mr. Grandison's office. But you say Captain Hartley bought her from your cousin Margaret; then who freed her?"

Kate. "Mr. Hartley."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Oh! Mr. Hartley. It is plain, my Kate, that you do not care to talk of this. But do let me ask one little question: What had the homely Hotspur to do with the matter?"

Kate. "I do not think it was his personal affair. Major Leszinksky possibly insisted that a wrong should be redressed; but Major Carson may have resented the wrong. From what I have heard of him he would be quick to take up his friend's quarrel."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Stanislaus Leszinksky is my ideal of a Christian gentleman; but yet he is

a soldier, and certainly he is a brave man. I do not think he would pass a quarrel to his friend. The law of his life is duty; but if you think he would avert danger from himself through his friend's risk, you simply do not know the man."

Kate. "You misunderstand. I do not doubt Major Leszinksky's courage, neither do I doubt his honor. I am sure there is no danger he would not risk to save a friend. But you remember his friend was not exposed. The duel that was talked of was prevented."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "I am glad you properly esteem Stanislaus Leszinksky, and I think you are right. It is more than probable that Hotspur split a hair in search of a quarrel and got snubbed for his pains. An amiable husband he will make Molly!"

Kate. "An excellent one, I am sure. Tender and brave go together."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Hunt in couples, eh? Kate, will you be good enough to tell where you got your liking for the Illinois major? I believe, in the vernacular of his State, that he 'hails' from Illinois."

Kate. "Colonel Roane esteems Major Carson

highly. You should hear him tell the story of Bouie's Hill—of Major Carson's brave defence of the Indian chief; of his devotion to his wife; of his gallantry and daring in coming alone through the Indian country for help when Colonel Kearney's command was cut off and surrounded by enraged savages."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Oh! ho! The Arkansaw Traveller? So he gives certificates of character that pass current with my dainty Kate." And the little lady nodded an emphasis to each word. "He is your authority, my dear?"

Kate. "An authority as to character that I know you will respect."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "I acknowledge him a second Daniel come to judgment when it is question of choice between bowie-knives or revolvers. His opinion of a man's ability to take care of himself, or even to help a friend, in an Arkansas free fight, I should receive as an indisputable dictum. But I doubt if he is a Solomon in his judgment of the qualifications of a husband."

Kate. "To sustain the authority I have given I refer you to another fact. Major Carson is Major Leszinksky's dearest friend. My cousin

Margaret loved him as a brother. He is her child's godfather."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Poor Rue! So that is how she came by her temper and her vagaries. No child could have withstood the ill-luck that must come from the infliction of such a godfather. Now I have at last a rational explanation of all Rue's escapades. I am no longer astonished at the battle with the dominie, the flight from Oxford, or her taste for low company."

Kate. "My dear Mrs. Carisbrooke, will you be good enough to tell me what my young cousin has done to justify the indictment you prefer against her?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Why, Kate, you are surely not offended at a jest? You know I love Rue dearly."

Kate. "Not offended, but 'the taste for low company' is rather a strong expression; and, frankly, I will say it did not please me. I do not forget that Rue represents the Cartarets. She is the head of the house. I am jealous for my chieftainess. But I hear she is an impulsive, imperious, little lady. I can fancy she would fight a dominie upon occasion. Please tell me the story." The manner of the speaker softened

the implied rebuke. The last phrase was spoken in the pleading tone of a child who asks the telling of a fairy tale.

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "If I tell you the story you will have to confess that the temper of your chieftainess would better become the frontier than 'The Cedars.' Why, Kate, if you are going to do battle with the friends who do not find Rue perfect, and who regret her bringing-up with soldiers and Indians, what will you do when all the starched proprieties of Virginia are drawn up in line against her, as they will be? Ah! I have not forgotten the conventional dames who made my holidays days of torture. I fought my best; but those blue-blooded old tabbies gave me scratches which were not altogether surface-wounds. Scars are hidden, my dear, beneath the pearl-powder and the laces, that were long in healing. Why, even in Ohio, on the hill, where life is free and talk floweth, like the wind, where it listeth, if I laugh aloud—a clear, good, lung-shaking laugh which has noise as well as gayety in it—and then close my eyes, I can yet breathe the odor and hear the rustle of those stiff, lavender-kept ancestral silks, and see the stony glare of the pale-blue, beady eyes of the ghosts

who are sitting a-row in some country-house where the county grandees are gathered. Eugh! I see them now peering through the leaves at me." She caught her friend's arm with so natural an expression of terror that Kate fell into the mime's trap and involuntarily looked around for the spectres Mrs. Carisbrooke had summoned out of the past. While the laugh of the little lady yet lingered in the air Kate repeated the question: "But the battle with the dominie?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Rue fought it fairly, and she routed the enemy, horse, foot, and dragoons. Did you never hear of the encounter?"

Kate. "Never."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "It should be told in a recitative epic to the sound of martial music. I am convinced that Rue is possessed, not of seven devils, but of the souls of many ancestors. Well, that day some old Macdonald had escaped from his over-warm cell in the unmentionable realm and had command of the garrison. The dominie in question is the husband of Major Carson's sister."

Kate. "I remember—the McCormacks. She was going to them the summer I saw her in Ohio. They lived in Oxford."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Right, my Œdipa. Person and place you have named correctly. Now that your memory has caught the thread of the labyrinth, it may twist into its meshes and bring before your mind's eye the boyish descendant of the great sachems; who was also going to dwell with the McCormacks. In the Yankee vernacular, do you *seem to see* the wild young Tom-Kitten of the Seminoles?"

Kate. "You mean Major Carson's son—young Stanislaus?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Yes; the grandson of the discrowned chief does bear the name of the kingliest of crowned or uncrowned Leszinkskys. Red-top has a very pretty and pretentious taste in the matter of names."

Kate. "But the story?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "You shall have the story. But you see I am growing old. Thought goes a-gadding. To understand the little history a short preface is indispensable. Or do you prefer an appendix with notes? Take your choice. Such small matters are trifles to me. I am extraordinarily clever at either preface or appendix. I am not one of your common historians, ready to cram you with facts. I have taste and

discernment. I know and humor a listener's fancy. Is it preface or appendix?"

Kate. "Preface. I would rather swallow the draught and have done with it."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "For that *un*compliment you shall have a double dose. I have half a mind to commence with the discovery of America. But to spare my breath I shall begin with the Florida war and the genealogy of my step-grandson, who was the son of his mother, who was the daughter of 'Wild-Cat,' who was the son of King Philip, who— *There* is a bar-sinister which I dare not cross."

Kate. "Confess frankly that your knowledge ends there."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "So it ought, my dear. Am I not a Virginian, and do I not remember the tabbies?"

Kate. "The story—please begin the story."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "I do, and then you interrupt. Where was I? Oh! King Philip, a most illogical Indian, was the protector and friend of a mixed tribe, called the Black Indians, who were the natural increase of escaped slaves from Georgia, with unnatural accessions of fresh runaways who, when the crops were wearing and

overseers over-cruel, were constantly quitting the plantations on the borders for the isles of the Everglades, where the yams were indigenous and the fishing perpetual. Do you *seem to see* King Philip and his allies?"

Kate. "King Philip, yes; the charge 'most illogical Indian' not proven."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "O learned Portia! I wish your father had not been a judge. Beautiful Paduan, I will prove the charge 'most illogical.' This protector of runaways, this Lloyd Garrison of the swamps, with his son Wild-Cat, the silver-tongued Wendell Phillips of the Seminoles who most eloquently denounced the slave-catching government of the United States, were the owners of many black men and women whom they held enslaved. Did their practice and theory correspond, most learned judge? Is it logical to protect runaways and hold slaves, O wise young barrister?"

Kate. "Where did they get their slaves?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "I will wager thee my bracelet against thy ring, out of which thou hast befooled thy client's friend, that there is a catch in thy question; but I will answer thee. They did not import the slaves from heathenish

Africa, as good Christians should, but they captured them from white owners."

Kate. "Then they were the spoils of war. These submissive slaves of the Indian's oppressor were the sinews of his strength. Nothing illogical in keeping them to service while assisting the unwilling slave to freedom. Their readiness to strike has prevented the enslavement of the Indian."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "I commenced to narrate history. I did not mean to invoke the perturbed spirit of Political Economy. If we are going to do that thing, Kate, we had better commence with the moral effect upon contemporary art of the landing of the Pilgrims. Let us epitomize the abstruse, and do it well and weightily. When a woman goes in for moral results in political science, sex and results are equiponderate."

Kate. "I cry you mercy! Now tell me the story of Rue; we have surely finished with genealogies. What of the dominie?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Keep in mind the facts which I have given you. Also please remember the few family servants Stanislaus Leszinksky inherited from his grandfather, and the hun-

dreds that wait Rue's majority to call her mistress. In short, if you have memorized and digested my preface you will easily perceive the dominie's unfitness to be guardian and preceptor of these imperious and wilful scions of two kingly races—who have been owners of serfs and slaves for numberless generations—when you understand that the Rev. Mr. McCormack is a teacher and a light in the councils of abolitionism."

Kate. "Why did Major Leszinksky choose such a home for my cousin?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. 'There spoke the pride and prejudice of the Cartarets. '*My cousin*'! It was the outcropping of the underlying thought of all Virginians—a race that do not thank God but rather congratulate him that they 'are not as other men.' When I see how these absurdities of the old colonial aristocracy are believed in and perpetuated, how the traditions of race and caste keep the representatives of the old lords paramount uppermost in the State, I know they will finally rule it to its ruin. They are proudly and profoundly ignorant."

Kate (*interrupting*). "You are scourging your own people."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Because they are my own

people I have the right to speak. Truth should be critic as well as counsellor in family discussion. I repeat, these representatives, encased in the ideas of the last century, scorning the progress which they do not understand, are consistently and deliberately ignorant of that which, for their country's good, they most need to know."

Kate. "Was Major Leszinksky's ignorance the foundation of his error in placing Rue with those abolitionists?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "It was an error in judgment from diametrically opposite reasoning to that, or rather to the non-reason, of our conservatists."

Kate. "Then progress can be error?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "My dear, Progress is often a fool. The wise statesman and the wise teacher 'hasten slowly.' Stanislaus Leszinksky and my illustrious mystery-keeper—I am glad Carisbrooke was advisory counsel and backer of his cousin's stupid choice—decided that, as Rue had been over-served and too devotedly loved, a change from the tropic to the frigid zone was the only and the specific remedy. You see that was the folly of intemperate progress. It was

the wisdom of men, my dear—to twist a girl out of her natural place and put her where the affections would be stunted and killed. Two Solomons did it, but any Queen of Sheba would have known better. I talked with the child's father and reasoned with the high-priest of my own household. The first urged the necessity of moderating Rue's intensity and the wisdom of teaching her betimes her responsibility for the people committed to her care; the other personage to whom I appealed 'pooh-poohed' my understanding of the matter. Candidly, I was not over-sorry at the upshot. You know a woman likes to have her beliefs justified. But at last we are coming to the battle, my dear."

Kate. "I see that foreshadowed in your eyes, O Bellona!"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Rue, who is Truth in a slender little body, told me the story; so did the dominie when he came in wrath to denounce the children of wrath. You shall have the history, divested of partisan prejudice, as my judicial mind seized and grouped the facts. The first week in June the Indian representative of the red-headed Carsons took up his abode with his father's sister and her husband.

The last of the same month Rue left us for Oxford. When she arrived there the village was in a ferment, and the house of the McCormacks was the centre of the disturbance. Three days before her arrival the dominie had thrashed the grandson of kings, and the young 'Wild-Kitten' had tried his claws and teeth on his uncle-in-law. The wild thing was tied hand and foot; the dominie's eye was in eclipse, and he carried one hand in a sling. Mrs. McCormack was divided in affection, but clear as to duty. (The most detestable of mortals are those duty-dames who are such experts at self-control when Murdstone gets his fling at child-torture.) She made no moan of remonstrance—at least none heard by the compassionate villagers—when the manacled young savage was consigned to the limbo of a hot garret under the roof. Professor Mitre, one of the Oxford dons who had been visiting us, took charge of Rue for the short journey. I had wished to go with the child, but Solomon decided it was better for her to arrive alone at the McCormacks', 'so that she would at once, and naturally, fall into her place in the household.' As it happened, Solomon's decision was a remarkable instance of the twinship of wis-

dom with—well, with the other thing. You remember 'the princess,' as Colonel Roane calls her, has the prettiest little manner ever seen out of a French comedy. There is an unconscious royalty in her imperiously courteous speech, a dignified yet girlish shyness in her carriage, which, united as it is to a certain soldierly directness, almost bluntness, in manner when stating a wish or asking a question—demands and obtains for her instant and deferential attention. After a very short conversation with Mrs. McCormack, and a bare interchange of polite greeting with the dominie, whom she confesses to have disliked at sight, she very naturally soon asked for her 'cousin.' (You know Rue has been brought up to consider herself akin to the 'red-tops.') Mrs. McCormack said she was 'sorry her nephew could not be with them that evening,' which Rue accepted as excuse for some unavoidable absence from the house that she could not understand, but which it might be discourteous to question. As for the boy's welfare or safety she had not the slightest uneasiness. How could she in the house of his father's sister?

"The next morning a slight but courteous in-

quiry was skilfully parried. To do the dominie justice, he made neither excuse nor apology. After breakfast he set himself to his task as instructor, and Rue settled steadily to work without a day's delay. Several days passed and the boy had not appeared. By this time Rue had doubts and preoccupations of her own, and was rather glad little 'Stan' was not there until her doubts should be resolved. Since the first day of her arrival, morning and evening, she heard earnest, agonizing prayer—it was really sincere—for the liberation of the black men and women who were so cruelly held in bondage. Continued repetition fixed these words in the child's memory: 'May Thy trials and plagues come upon these worse than Egyptian task-masters until they let the slave go free! May the plague-spot be cleaned from the nation, and the shedders of innocent blood and the doers of violence be punished!'* Rue's thought had begun to take knowledge of the petitioner's meaning, when one morning, in an unusually fervid heat, the dominie prayed 'that the lesson of God's vengeance might be taught to the slave-owners, if need be, through the death of the

* Quoted from Helper's book.

first-born; that the Union might be broken into fragments and the innocent freed from blood-guiltiness and crime; that the criminal might be scourged away from his sin.' When that prayer ended Rue's question was very direct: 'Are all who own negroes sinners and criminals?' 'Yes,' said the dominie stoutly, 'all.' Rue continued: 'My father owns the servants who belonged to Grandpapa Mason. I will own all the people on my Grandpapa Cartaret's estates. My father told me you would teach me how to care for and protect my black people. He wished me to come North, that I might learn the value of labor and how to educate my laborers for the future in which he hoped they would be free. He said if the people of the North and South knew each other's thoughts and troubles it would teach them to be more charitable. He wished me to love the whole country and to feel that we are one people. He explained this to me over and over, that I might understand. But you have slandered my father in your prayers. You hate us, and you do not really love our black people. If you did you would not pray for evil to come upon us, for they love us. My father prays for them and for me, that I may do them

good. But you—I cannot teach you all my father has taught me, but I will never listen to another of your prayers. They do not make me try to do good, to be better; they only make me angry.' She was leaving the room, after preaching her sermon on charity, when he rudely caught her arm. He hurt the tender flesh—the print of his fingers lasted for days—but she would not cry out at the pain, because she thought it was not intended. Holding her there, he denounced her spirit as 'the spirit of the slave-holder, which should and would be fettered.' The Southerners, he said, were 'ruffians, criminals, outlaws; their treatment of their slaves wicked, monstrous, damnable; an honest man could have no fellowship with them in religion or society.' * This much the child remembered, and he himself repeated it when he was defending what he had said. There were other expressions, descriptive of social crimes and horrors, that fortunately Rue did not understand. From his own showing he raved himself breathless. When he could listen she ordered him to release her, and to be silent in her presence until her father should come and take her from his house. He com-

* Helper's book.

plained that she *ordered* him, and she admitted the *ordering*. I can imagine her steadily courageous and haughtily imperious manner in giving her orders. Then the man must have lost his senses—he says he lost his temper, but I am sure he did not; the most charitable conclusion is that he is demented. He shook her violently, and then as he released her, throwing her from him, her shoulder struck against the low mantelpiece and dislocated her left arm. The dominie sprang forward—he says to catch her from falling; she thought to strike her. Rue is active and quick, and in her life on the frontier has learned to improvise weapons. She caught up the fire-tongs—which, from their effect upon a hard substance, I imagine were excellent steel—and floored the dominie."

Kate. "She was perfectly in the right. I hope she hurt him."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "I tell you, my dear, she laid him out. Mrs. McCormack's shrieks brought a servant, who, finding the dominie senseless on the floor and Rue pale and faint on a lounge, rushed out and gave the quiet village an unaccustomed sensation by crying 'Murder!' The little study was soon crowded. Our friend Pro-

fessor Mitre arrived with two of the village doctors. By that time the child's arm was so swollen and painful that Mrs. McCormack's accusations of murderous intention were met by counter-accusations, made by persons who had already heard whisperings of the dominie's cruelty to his wife's nephew, and who now found confirmation of that story in the injury to Rue. When the dominie recovered consciousness he was alone with his wife and one physician. Rue's arm had been set and bandaged, and an indignation meeting was being held in the hall. The universal opinion of the doctor's knock-down was, 'Served him right.' For Rue there was the kindliest and most outspoken sympathy. Then there was talk of the child in the garret. Rue, hearing this, asked quick, anxious questions; and regardless of the cautions of her new-found friends, who begged her to wait the return of the gentleman who had gone to liberate the boy, she ran up the stairs. The little, dark garret was open, and Rue heard Professor Mitre's voice in pitying accents—'My poor boy! poor child! poor child!' The professor had cut the rope that tied the child to the sloping rafters, and which confined him to a small pallet-bed.

His hands were tied together behind his back with a soft but strong cloth bandage. The avoidance of injury in the manner of the bandage had been the dominie's only mercy. The meeting of the children, Rue's heart-broken sobs for the boy's suffering—she had never uttered a complaint when her arm was set—his pitiful manner of looking at her and stroking her bandaged arm, brought the temper of the sympathetic on-lookers to such heat that but for the physician's assurance that the dominie's case was critical he would have been lynched then and there. Mrs. McCormack came into the hall and loyally defended her husband. I tell you, Kate, there are women born to reverence the Murdstones of this world. She insisted that the dominie had acted from a sense of duty in punishing the boy, who was obdurate, and who had constantly fought his uncle, refusing to promise amendment if he was released. She said his Indian blood and his untamed spirit made discipline difficult, but that his father had wished him to be controlled and taught to obey. As to Rue, she had been 'insolent and aggressive'; that her husband had only held the girl's arm when he was speaking to her; and that as soon as he re-

leased it she had caught the tongs and struck him a blow that might yet be fatal. Her story was listened to coldly, but it made impression. The noise quieted and the little assembly dispersed. Professor Mitre waited until all were gone. He then frankly expressed to Mrs. McCormack his disapprobation of the dominie's methods of instruction and his own determination to write to us. He said that as Rue had been sent to Oxford under his protection as escort, it was his duty to let us know at once the very difficult situation of affairs. Mrs. McCormack agreed that it was his duty. He offered to take Rue home with him until her friends came. But Rue refused to leave the boy, and Mrs. McCormack said firmly 'Stan' should not leave the house except with his father. She promised that the children should not be separated or punished in any manner. So the professor was obliged to accept her promise and leave the children. All that day they stayed quietly in Rue's room. Twice the sympathetic servant took them food. In the evening, when the doctor came to see the dominie, he went up to Rue, telling her Mr. McCormack was 'much better, that he would soon be well,' and rearranging the bandages. The next

morning, before breakfast, I heard Molly call her father in such quick, excited tones that I was frightened. Such noise from that placid person made me think the house afire. I rushed to the piazza and found two trembling, feverish, foot-sore children telling the tale I have just told you. They had left the McCormacks at midnight and walked twelve miles to Hamilton. From there they took the first train to the Mill Creek station, where they hired an expressman to bring them to us. Rue's arm was terribly inflamed; she was sick for a week. I never saw such dog-like devotion—the comparison, I assure you, is meant as a compliment—as that the Wild-Kitten showed your chieftainess. Night and day he was seated on the mat at her door. Carisbrooke, who never threatens, actually did say he would send him back to the dominie if he would not go to bed."

Kate. "You see there is good blood in the boy."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Possibly—on the Indian side. I am sure he did not get many good drops from his Aunt McCormack."

Kate. "There is excuse for her: she believed in her husband. You admit that he is an

honest fanatic. But when did you hear his story?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "The morning after the children arrived Carisbrooke wrote to the dominie that he intended to keep the children until he heard from their parents. But the dominie came within a week to demand the boy. I believe Carisbrooke would have trusted his promises and given Wild-Kitten up but for me, or rather for what I knew the result would be to Rue. The excitement of her campaign with the Abolition forces had brought back the nervous fever from which she had so lately recovered."

Kate. "It was during the next spring that Major Leszinksky took her to Philadelphia?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Yes; and the young 'Wild-Cat' remained with us. So you see Rue's battle with the dominie brought Red-top about our house at all times and seasons, and was the primal cause of my affliction in this matter of a son-in-law."

Kate. "At last. 'Mary-buds 'gin ope their eyes,' and here is my dear Molly." Then a feminine osculation began which so enraged this historian that he gathered up his notes and abruptly closed the chapter.

CHAPTER XXIII.

"A calm, restful nature, which brings solace and blessing to the poor, worn, tired wayfarers who are all a-quiver with the agony of life's defeat."—OLD MS.

SUCH a nature was Molly's: not beautiful—her mother's daughter could not well have been a beauty—but lovable, and lovely as the mignonette through that subtle radiation, that aroma of quality, which is the greatest as it is also the rarest charm of girlhood. Standing there between two representative women—the beauty and the woman of spirit—Molly's attractiveness was heightened and defined. It was the simple charm of perfect womanliness.

The rose is queen of the garden, the flame of the marigold kindles the fancy of poet and artist, but the mignonette is tenderly gathered and pressed to the lips and heart of the lover.

Kate. "I am so glad to have you here; and so glad for you, my Molly."

Molly. "And I to see you. But why are you glad for me, Cousin Kate?"

Kate. "That 'the prince has come,' and that he is a true prince and lover."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "A fiddlestick for such a prince! A carroty-headed sachem of the Illinois swamps! A girl's wits must have gone wool-gathering when she picks up such a prize."

Molly. "The *mater* does not mean it, Cousin Kate." The girl bent her blushing face to kiss her mother's eyes, saying: "She is the dearest and kindest of mothers; but she is a tempery little woman, and sometimes she forgets that words are bees, which sting when they are roughly or carelessly handled."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "I wish you joy of your sachem. Now are you content?"

Molly. "Perfectly content, mamma. The ring of sarcasm in your tone does not deceive me. I hear under it full and true joy-wishes. Cousin Kate will pardon me for thanking you for your tardy congratulation before I thank her for her free-will offering. You make me very happy, mamma." Again the girl bent to her mother, who fondly kissed her and then quietly turned and left the conservatory. Molly, looking after her, said softly: "Poor mamma! That spoken

consent has cost her dear. We shall know how to thank her for it."

The plural was the proof of love's truth and love's strength. But just here the girl and her friend, after their feminine fashion, again fell a-kissing. With that I left the house.

Putting in my pocket the ring of Gyges, I sauntered up Pennsylvania Avenue. Stopping to exchange salutations with the dandies who were posing under the canopied entrance of the National Hotel, I met that prince of humorists and king of good fellows, the greatest popular orator of his time—the Hon. Thomas Corwin, of Ohio. He, using me as a providential and convenient crutch to his carriage, took me to the Capitol. Strange to say, in that seething political period our talk was not of sections nor of parties. It was of Thackeray. This was how it came about. Asking about an acquaintance, the answer was a story of misfortune ending in disgrace. We were both silent for a little while, when Mr. Corwin began: "'It is so easy to be good upon five thousand a year.' In that sentence Becky Sharp gives the pith and substance of human ethics. Poverty is the touchstone of virtue, my friend. If you will watch the

working of Providence you will see that it mostly spares the weakest, the meanest, and the most unscrupulous from touch of the talisman. Those are the three classes that wax fat with riches. In the world's economy they serve base uses. Like their ducats, they are moulded of malleable metal. Now, the human wedges that are made to split difficulties must be wrought of solid iron or fibrous steel. If a bit of rotten old stuff from a wedge that served a rougher generation has been carelessly thrown into the furnace with the new ore, it will crumble to pieces upon the anvil; or if the steel has a flaw in it, it will damage things as it breaks under the hammer. But at least it has been put to the proof. Poor B——! He would have moulded into good and passable pennies; but he had not the stuff in him for a wedge. He would have been very 'good upon five thousand a year.' Did you see Thackeray when he was here?"

"No."

"Ah! what a miss was that—not to have seen the wisest and humanest of living English essayists, and, save Shakespeare, the greatest of living or dead creators and analysts of men and women! And the man himself is so lova-

ble, so full of quips and quirks of humor and pathos, of playfulness and melancholy."

"I thought him the grimmest of cynics."

"I credited you with better judgment. I did not think you would pin your faith upon the shallow evidence which tickles the ears of the groundlings. Study 'Henry Esmond.' Take 'Vanity Fair' itself—that picture which is almost awful in its truth; that Hogarthian panorama of London, which is to say of the world's heart—and you will find that the true artist who sees men and women as they are, gives them at their best, whilst preserving the human likeness. He lets in the sunlight, but he softens the shadows. Why, I tell you I love Becky Sharp, and so did Thackeray."

"I am glad to hear what you say, for of all of the writers of this century I admire him most."

"Which seems to me damnable and faint praise. Why, man, he is the last of the demigods. The nearest approach to him in this century is the Frenchman Balzac. Yet see the difference: both give realistic pictures of life, but one saddens and teaches you to excuse, while the other disgusts and teaches you to contemn, humanity."

"I have never read Balzac."

"Then read 'Père Goriot'; it is the 'King Lear' of French literature. The best recommendation of Balzac that I can give you is Thackeray's admiration for him. He told me he was content with the days when he was too ill to work, for then he could shut the door against bores and read Balzac."

"Did you see much of Thackeray?"

"He visited me at Lebanon. They were weeks of perfect delight to every member of my household. It is the period of time which of all others it would most grieve me to forget."

"It must have been a good time for Thackeray —that is, if an Englishman could understand your humor. But your very face is a comedy; he would surely understand that."

The wry face that was twisted at me then set me in a roar of laughter, which was hushed as well as might be when Mr. Corwin spoke; but even then there was a running cackle that I found it impossible to check as that most mobile of faces gave a rich, humorous meaning and comic emphasis to every word.

"So you have fallen into that fool's trap? I

pledge you my honor I am the most serious man alive. Can I help it if, when I talk words of soberness and wisdom, asses will laugh? I am the most unfortunate of men—plain, blunt, earnest, and yet when I speak men grin at me as if Harlequin had that minute jumped from my throat. It is a curse, sir—I tell you it is a curse. It has lamed my life and killed my ambition. I am constantly taken for a buffoon, sir—a senseless jest-maker. I no sooner appear upon the stump, sir, to instruct my fellow-citizens upon grave questions of public polity, than I find myself face to face with countless grinning apes, who think they see in me an instigator and promoter of their diabolical mirth. I tell you it has killed me, sir. It has killed me politically and judicially. When I argue a point of law the court grins. When I defend a murderer, and paint a picture of remorse and despair which would move an angel to tears, sir, twelve idiots laugh in the jury-box. In the Senate, sir, even in the Senate, when I am only anxious to have my rare and rarely eloquent attempts to save the country listened to and put in print, sir—like the balance of 'em—I tell you, sir, senators roar at me—roar at me."

I could hear no more, for just then we entered the Capitol and passed into the Vice-President's room. A party of ladies and gentlemen were talking with the second citizen of the United States, and, recognizing my people, I left Mr. Corwin dolefully facing a gaunt, tall millionaire from New York, who immediately began boring him with a steamship mail contract. Slipping on my precious ring, I glided into place near Mrs. Carisbrooke, Mrs. Hartley, and Molly. Captain Hartley, who for three years had been a member of the House of Representatives, was in attendance upon Mrs. Carisbrooke. The Arkansian, Colonel Roane—also a member—was the escort of Mrs. Hartley and Molly. Washington is the city of surprises as well as "magnificent distances." When the door-bell of a resident rings it may be a neighbor from next door or a gentleman from Timbuctoo who is announced. "It is the unexpected that always arrives" at the Columbian city. Having learned this truism, Mrs. Hartley was not at all astonished at the sudden appearance of Grandison and Horry while Mr. Breckenridge was cordially welcoming his old friends the Carisbrookes to

Washington. Then there was half an hour of greeting, of mutual inquiry and desultory talk of old friends and of past and coming changes. Grandison had been for two years a resident of Texas. Coming through Cincinnati on his way to Washington, he had brought Horry with him —a willing captive. There were politicians, in and out of place, waiting for a word with Breckenridge. The Vice-President was in a chrysalis state. This week his wings were opening to carry the Presidency, and an astounding number of assistants were making mad rushes from Baltimore, that they might be ready to brush the expanding wings.

Such courtiers soon grow impatient of their lord's delay. Why should he waste speech upon the ears of women while the cringing, fawning parasites wait to begin their chorus? The murmur of their discontent reached him, and with hurried adieux the ambitious aspirant for the first place in the republic rustled his budding wings and flew to listen to the ambassadors from the caucuses—those spokesmen of the people, those democratic high-priests, who have proved to the ages that grand *un*truth: that the voice of the people is the voice of God.

Horry offered his arm to Molly, saying: "Being a youthful and unshackled knight, I dare offer my arm where I have vainly tendered my hand. Possibly, Miss Molly, I may win gratitude for taking you out of danger, though love failed me. When you think I have had time to enumerate my virtues and charms, Mrs. Carisbrooke, you will find us in the library."

Captain Hartley was about to leave his wife and Mrs. Carisbrooke in the rotunda near the library door, with Grandison and Roane, when his sister, Mrs. Cartaret, met them.

It was explained that, the wind being unfavorable, the yachting party had decided to visit the Capitol. They had but just arrived from Alexandria. Some of the party knew Mrs. Carisbrooke; all but two were friends of Mrs. Hartley.

Captain Hartley had a queer look on his face, and Mrs. Cartaret seemed much embarrassed when she introduced the two strangers to her sister-in-law. One was a beautiful young girl, child-like in face, but developed in form to such perfectness that face and figure were sufficiently contradictory to be puzzling in their definition of age. The other was an exceedingly handsome, self-satisfied young dandy, who was introduced

as "my cousin, Mr. Bradnor." The girl's name had been too indistinctly spoken to be heard. Kate looked inquiringly at her sister-in-law, and the name was repeated—"Miss Mai Hilton." The name implied kinship to Mrs. Cartaret's first husband. The second inquiry was spoken: "A relative?"

Mrs. Cartaret. "Yes, a relative."

Mrs. Hartley. "I am glad to welcome a relative of my sister's to Washington. I hope she will persuade you to stay with us, Miss Hilton. We can offer you unusual attraction. Mrs. Carisbrooke and her daughter will help us make your visit pleasant. Before you decide let me introduce you to Molly; I am sure you will then decide in our favor."

Mrs. Hartley was about to lead the way in search of Molly. She had not waited for an answer. She wished first to prepare the girl for acceptance. She saw her sister-in-law's embarrassment and misinterpreted it. She thought it a scruple of Mrs. Cartaret's—a desire not to force an offer of hospitality to a Hilton, to a relative of her first husband. She turned and took the young girl's hand to lead her to the library. Mrs. Carisbrooke and Mrs. Cartaret were to-

gether, but Mrs. Cartaret was evidently only half listening to her companion. Captain Hartley had either forgotten the business which he had urged as an excuse for leaving them, or the presence of the New-Yorkers had determined him to break his engagement. Grandison and Roane were just without the library door, waiting for the ladies. Thus they were in broken groups, but all interest evidently centred upon Mrs. Hartley and her companion.

Mrs. Carisbrooke, conscious of Mrs. Cartaret's absorption, again looked at Miss Hilton, wondering what likeness it was she saw. Suddenly the strangest recollection came to her. As she looked at the full, sensuous beauty of the girl, through some subtle likeness that worked the transformation the pale, worn face, the shrunken, fragile form, of the quadroon Lucy seemed to stand before her. She was so startled at the thought that she looked quickly around, as if in fear of some one reading her thought. She saw Captain Hartley, pale and eager, watching his wife; and the mystery of Mrs. Cartaret's embarrassment was solved.

The yachting party were busy with a chance acquaintance they had met in the rotunda. Mrs.

Cartaret had turned to them, and Mrs. Carisbrooke was close to Kate, who was now looking in a bewildered way into the girl's eyes. They seemed to her the violet eyes of the baby who died in her arms years ago at Oakhill. There was a quick spasm of pain at her heart; she was pale to the very lips, but she said to the girl:

"Forgive my rudeness. Your eyes are my excuse. They are very like—like eyes that were dear to me long ago." There was a questioning look in the girl's beautiful eyes; but they closed softly as Kate, *knowing this was "Hagar's" child*, stooped and kissed the blue-veined lids.

Need we wonder that the divine spirit of motherhood has been crowned Queen of Heaven when day after day we see the miracles it works in the hearts of flesh? Hand-in-hand the two went in search of Molly, leaving Mrs. Carisbrooke, who was quickly joined by Grandison and Roane.

The yachting party, with Mrs. Cartaret as cicerone—who was glad to get away from the explosion she feared—were busy examining those wonderful specimens of crude art, those unique illustrations of the Pocahontian period, and the later historic absurdities which now decorate

(and disfigure) the central gallery of the Capitol.

As his wife and his daughter went through the door leading to the library Captain Hartley again hastily made his excuses to his friends: "they were waiting for him in his committee-room."

Hartley had need to be alone. The eternal battle of good and evil was raging within him. In the beginning he had loved his daughter because of her beauty and of a resemblance that flattered his vanity. But love, that works purification through ways that mere reason cannot follow nor understand, was gradually purging the dross of self from his affection for his child. He was becoming capable of sacrifice and of gratitude for her sake. This love for her and his life in her were already apart from that other life he had lived. I can best express my meaning by saying that in his heart he had set up a wall of partition between his vices, with their resultant crimes, and his daughter. His wife's recognition of his daughter—for he did not doubt that Kate had recognized the child she had seen at Oakhill—endangered his wall of partition. Their clasping hands linked his daughter to his crimes. Then, in his thought, he cursed his

sister for the folly of her management. From the first he had felt no particular thankfulness for her interest in the child. Nor did he credit her now with the care, the protection, and name she had given his daughter. With the fatuity of anger he insisted to himself, "that he could have done much better for Mai if Julia had not meddled." Mrs. Cartaret's indulgent kindness to her "ward" had brought about this conjunction that threatened a fresh attack from the tormentors that had found him in Cincinnati, where remorse had so nearly forced him to confession, and where terror had confronted him with a ghost under the lamp-light that had not been altogether laid, for in waking and sleeping dreams he had been pursued by the dumb pleading of the robbed mother. Would she always be dumb? She had refused his offer of money for release of her right in her child. She had left the child with him, but she had made no promise. Would she not assert her right? Twice he had seen her in the hallway of the school in Philadelphia where Mai was. Twice she had nursed the child through slight illnesses. After each of these attacks of her child Lucy's own malady had returned and she had disap-

peared. She was slightly insane—even Dr. Carisbrooke admitted that—and Hartley dared not have her consigned to a mad-house, because of the Carisbrookes and of Leszinksky. And now Julia's folly had brought Mai face to face with the Carisbrookes. They would know; and he fell a-cursing not only in thought but in words. Remorse had not yet brought repentance.

As Grandison and Roane joined Mrs. Carisbrooke, Grandison asked: "Who is this new beauty, this rising star, Mrs. Carisbrooke?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Miss Hilton—some connection of Mrs. Cartaret's. Her first husband was a Hilton, and a precious scamp."

She could not resist this fling at the girl. Consciously—for she understood the hidden relationship—she resented what she defined to herself as "an insult to Kate, this presentation of a relative whom Mrs. Cartaret should have ignored." Unconsciously she was provoked and jealous of the beauty which so eclipsed Molly's.

Colonel Roane. "Had the 'precious scamp' a 'visible admixture' of African blood?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "No; I think the Anglo-Saxon race has to bear the burden of his ill-

deeds. The blood was bad, but I believe it ran in the veins of a white man."

There was a secret triumph in her thought, which it was hard to keep from expression, that, despite the girl's beauty, something betrayed the octoroon to eyes so keen and so experienced as those of the Arkansian slave-owner.

Grandison. "I was sure you were mistaken, Roane. He insisted, Mrs. Carisbrooke, that there was an unmistakable taint of the African in the very perfectness of that rare beauty."

Roane. "Knowing Mrs. Carisbrooke is neither indiscreet in speech nor intolerant of expression of belief founded on reason, I still insist that an honest eighth of the 'Beauty's' blood came from Africa."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "What are your proofs?"

Grandison. "Yes, proofs—give us proofs!"

Roane. "They are difficult to classify, but they are irrefutable. Any negro-trader would see them at once. First, the peculiar color of the eyes."

Grandison. "They are pure violet eyes—'deeply, darkly blue.'"

Roane. "Blue set in ivory. There is no reflection of their color in the surrounding white.

It is simply a dead white up to the line of the iris. Captain Hartley has eyes of the same color, but observe the difference in the reflection."

Mrs. Carisbrooke (*blankly*). "Captain Hartley?"

Grandison (*repeats*). "Captain Hartley! By Jove, there is a likeness! What do you mean, Roane?"

Roane. "Simply to point the difference there is between the violet eyes of an octoroon and those of a Caucasian."

A woman's persistence in inquiry, always remarkable, is peculiarly so when her flounces skirt the edge of a question which it would be indiscreet to attack directly. The ingenuity, the dexterity, the mental agility then shown by a daughter of Eve have a certain charm for me. A stolid man is always wondering what next. It is the much-vaunted attraction of the unknown.

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "The eye-proof is not decisive."

Grandison. "Nor satisfactory."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "You are silenced?"

Roane. "Neither the color nor the wave of

the silky hair do I claim as proofs positive, but they are aids to opinion."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "They are not proofs."

Roane. "No, madam; I admit they are not. But there is a test, an infallible test; only I cannot apply it. Neither could I see the base of the glove-covered nails."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Then the nails are proofs?"

Roane. "Assuredly. Where there is mixed blood the base of the rosiest nails will be slightly discolored. Just the faintest tinge of yellow or brown is proof."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "And the infallible test?"

Roane. "Is the point of the nose."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "What absurdity is that? Why, the girl's nose is simply perfect!"

Grandison. "Could not be purer Greek if it had been cut by Phidias or Praxiteles."

Roane. "Shape is nothing in the proof. The test is not a question of shape, neither is it of color. And who dare touch that lovely nose to resolve the question?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke and Grandison at once. "Touch the nose!"

Roane. "Yes; to feel if the cartilage is di-

vided at the point. In the pure-blooded African the cartilage of the nose is undivided and wholly unsupported by an upspringing bridge. With the 'visible admixture' you get the support, but there is still a drooping and undivided cartilage. In the octoroon, and even the quadroon, the nose may be the arched Roman or the straight and shapely Greek, but as long as there is a drop of the African blood there is no perceptible division of the cartilage of the nostrils at the outer point of the nose. In the white race the division is marked."

Mrs. Carisbrooke and Grandison, feeling their noses. "Yes!"

Roane. "That is the infallible test. But who dare apply it to the 'Beauty'?"

Nothing more was said, and the "nosologists" looked guiltily at each other as the "Beauty" appeared with Molly in the open doorway. But Mrs. Carisbrooke had privately determined that a certain scientific looking into things is not only permissible but laudable.

Kate had joined the girls, and Horry came to the waiting trio of scientists and made this complaint to Mrs. Carisbrooke:

Horry. "Madam, I am thrown overboard. I

am an offering to the sharks that swim in the troubled waters through which sail the ships that carry the fortunes of bachelors. Once again, madam, your daughter has discarded me. It is a vicious habit she acquired in her childhood. You should look to it that she correct it. She hinted an apology that adds to the bitterness of defeat. I did not dare disturb the calm serenity of her soul with question, but I ask you to settle my doubt, to end my misery. Is there another Richmond in the field—another and a better?"

The tall, thin figure was stiffened to its utmost height, and the long, thin, shapely fingers and the clear hazel eyes pointed and flashed the question.

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Your regrets are as nothing to mine. You know you were my ideal of my coming son-in-law. But, alas for my dream! there is another—and such another! Where you are tall, he is short; where you are thin, he is thick; where you are courteous, and wise, and witty, he is brusque and—well, he is solidly sensible, but not bright. Then he is bullet-headed and red-headed, where you are—"

She paused, and Horry, who had accented each

comparison by a tragi-comic pose, touched his thin gray hair.

Horry. "I see him, madam! More for you than for myself—though the gods know how I suffer -- do I regret his success. Why, look on that picture and on this. You had not finished your sketch? But see this classic front, these abundant locks, sable-silvered. Why, madam, for her to make such a choice, to give me such a rival, is the poisoned sting in the arrow of fate. The subtle irony of malignant fortune runs through every word that has thus brought me face to face with disaster."

Roane. "Is this a farce, Mrs. Carisbrooke, or is Miss Molly engaged? I presume so old a friend of yours, so devoted an admirer of Miss Molly's, as I am may ask."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "I thought your friend had told you—for he is your friend. Molly is engaged to Major Carson."

Roane. "Then I can most sincerely offer my congratulations. May I congratulate Miss Molly, or is it not to be told?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "It is not to be proclaimed from the house-tops, but it may be quietly

spoken. To me it is yet more a subject for condolence than congratulation."

Grandison. "Your loss is great—an only daughter."

Roane. "But you gain a son, Mrs. Carisbrooke."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Such a son!"

Horry. "And to lose such a daughter!"

Roane. "That is Carson's gain. If it offends you, Mrs. Carisbrooke—but I do not believe it will—I must say it. I think they are very fairly mated. A brave, true, and loyal gentleman has won a very perfect wife."

Horry. "Is the end of all things near at hand? When will this marriage come to pass?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "When she and Carisbrooke please; I wash my hands of the matter."

Roane. "I do not think it will be long before you are out of your agony, Horry; the proclamation is now being made, Mrs. Carisbrooke."

She turned to see both Molly's hands in Carson's, who, regardless of the place and the little assembly, kissed the broad, fair brow of his promised wife.

CHAPTER XXIV.

The coachman who drives a four-in-hand needs to keep his wits about him and his reins untangled. Since I started with these skittish and badly-broken colts I have put down but few of the people booked at the start, though I have been forced to take up fresh passengers at every stopping-place. The shadowy and silent "Hagar" still sits beside me, and I have dropped but two of the outsiders. But the places inside are fast being filled by the people I pick up by the way. I know the colts are likely to be over-weighted, but what can I do? There are yet empty places, and when I would fain pass the wayfarer who beckons, some "nob" on top calls out, "That is the person I told you we should find about here. Halloo, driver! do you hear? Let me down or take him (or her) up!" So another is entered for the trip, as there are empty places inside and seats in the rumble. What am I to do? I dare not lose a first-class passenger and bring the contractors in for damages, though in this over-effort there is danger of an upset.

[Let us drop this prolonged simile for a grievance.]

A WISE reviewer found a double authorship in my last book. I think the same sagacious critic may by the same rule find a dozen hands in this. There are "pot-hooks and hangers," the round letters of the school-boy and essays at copper-plate; there are the long, skipping lines of a French running-hand and the heavy down-slopes of an English writer, the slant of a cynic and the slow uprise of a melancholy humorist. The critic had and he shall have reason

for the petty sarcasm. To save a rewriting, which might give him pain, I am willing to confess there are many of me. There is the penny-a-liner; he, poor wretch, comes in the headachy days when debts are pressing and there is a general emptiness in this work-a-day world. There is the valiant braggart who would fain be fine and ruffle it with the wits who have swaggered in the sunshine of popular favor; what splashes and dashes he leaves upon the page! There is the poor scholar who courts the muses and sighs after greatness; he tenders me broken hexameters and scraps from the Virgilians. And on rare days—alackaday that the white stones are so few!—comes the honest worker, who writes the truths he has gathered in the school of a bitter experience, which he pitifully tries to sweeten with the pictured reflection of the good deeds he has seen shining in this naughty world.

Having headed this chapter with sops, with which I pray the gods may soften Cerberus, I shall leave those people we met in the rotunda to talk love (as a few of them will do without our leave) or politics (which is hot work with the thermometer up in the nineties and threats of secession in the throats of all the Southerners)

while I go back and see what changes these four years have worked to the Leszinkskys.

I think I have said somewhere—but if I have it will bear repetition, and if I have not I say it now—that there was always in the manner of Stanislaus Leszinksky to any woman thrown upon his care a tender solicitude, a careful watching of little things, an anxious haste to shield from the small discomforts of life, a magnetic consciousness of feminine wants, a sympathetic softening of harsh or discordant surroundings, which won him the loving gratitude of every woman thus placed.

Rue's experience with the dominie, though it may have failed to teach her aught else, had taught her to understand and appreciate the rare minor excellences of her father's character.

After the Oxford *fiasco* Rue was for two months at Rosebank—neither ill nor well, but, as Dr. Carisbrooke decided, needing careful watching, good nursing, and rest. The watching the doctor gave, Lucy was the nurse, and Molly the restful companion.

In September Major Leszinksky came and took Rue for a short visit to Mount Hope, intending to go thence to Philadelphia. But there was

such a nervous outbreak when the time of parting with her father came that he could not resist her prayer to go home with him, although there she was a discordant element—she had never forgiven her stepmother for the taunt which she believed had driven the Big Chief to his death, nor for the selfishness of fright which had shut Mrs. Carson off from a place of refuge. Had the family still been at Bouie's Hill, where all these mournful recollections centred, Rue would have steeled herself to the parting with her father and conquered her dislike to Northern schools. But Leszinksky had been ordered to one of the posts on the Rio Grande, and the change and the free life on the frontier, to which Rue had long been accustomed, seemed to him the most promising cure for a malady which threatened to undermine the child's strength.

The difficulty for Major Leszinksky was to harmonize his household. His wife's health was frail, and her temper sullenly jealous and easy to take offence. To keep Rue out of the house, to restore her strength and build up her mental as well as bodily health, he made her his comrade.

At drill, in camp inspection, in the short ex-

cursions to the neighboring settlements, even in the busy hours of his office-work, Rue was always by her father's side. She had been taught to ride in her babyhood; she was now taught to swim, to shoot, to fence. She was truly a child of the camp. Every soldier in the old regiment was her personal acquaintance and comrade. She was first at parade, first in the saddle when the bugle sounded. No words of compliment ever brought to her the thrill of delight she felt when she heard Carson say to her father: "That child does more for the behavior of the troops than the entire War Department could do. The greatest blackguard among them is a gentleman in her presence. I am sure they would follow her lead if she charged the very devil himself."

The last phrase so captivated Rue's fancy that it led to results that changed the manner of her life. Her accomplishments were already those of a boy. Her education was of necessity masculine and desultory. Her father was her tutor; the few hours he could spare from his regimental work were spent in study with his daughter, and then he never tolerated carelessness or idleness. But the great evil in this way

of life was that Rue was rapidly acquiring the manner of a boy accustomed to rule by the slightest expression of will, and to whom instant obedience was given.

During that fall a young officer, just graduated from West Point, had joined the regiment. With the unreasoning prejudice of a child, which, with the frankness of a child, Rue took no pains to hide, she disliked the new-comer. Her father's reproof forced a cold politeness, though even that was grudgingly given. Either from quick magnetic sympathy with their favorite, or else from the same indefinable sensation of repulsion, the regiment disliked the young fellow. When on duty he was obeyed, but the obedience was not the warm, spontaneous acceptance of command which is given where rule is enforced by respect and personal regard. With the quick perception of a child Rue felt this, and felt also that the officers were in a measure affected by it.

The young lieutenant was exceedingly handsome and something of a dandy. Through that quality a way of offence was found.

In Lieutenant Bradnor's first scouting expedition he had Bob Stearns for guide. The lieutenant, unlearned in frontier life, came to the

start in a spotless new uniform. Rue's stepmother was unusually ill, and her father had gone with the surgeon to his wife's room, so Rue was alone at the office. She called Bob to make some change in a new collar he had given Bruno, and said in an undertone:

"Take the lieutenant through the swamp, Bob, through the black mud and the undergrowth."

"Yes, Cap'n Rue," he answered, with a broad grin of approval.

"If he stands that without spoiling, swim the 'cut-off.' That dandy rig needs christening."

He touched his cap; and as the men rode by she saw the mirthful mischief in the bronzed faces, and knew the order had passed down the line. They returned at sundown. The lieutenant, wet, scratched, dirty, and furious, dismounted to give his report to Major Leszinksky. As he passed Rue she laughed and walked carelessly to where the men waited.

"You did it well, Bob."

"Yes, Cap'n Rue; the chaparral was tougher and the mud blacker'n usual."

There was half-suppressed laughter, and the lieutenant turned to look. He understood the

conspiracy. His report was soon made and he left hurriedly for his quarters. Major Leszinksky came to the door and called, in a voice which indicated that he was angry:

"Stearns!"

"Here, major."

"Go to the guard-house and report yourself under arrest."

"Yes, major."

"Take the men with you."

"Are they all under arrest, major?"

"Yes."

"Papa! papa! please do not punish the men. It was my fault. I gave the order."

"What order?"

"The order—to—to—spoil the lieutenant's dandy uniform and scratch him in the bushes."

Her father went hastily into the office, whilst she followed the squad to the guard-house with words of cheer, and then rushed off to beg Carson's intercession in their behalf. On her way back she met Lieutenant Bradnor, who had changed his clothing and was going to supper. She laughed and saluted him, but he passed without look or sign of recognition. Bruno, accustomed to friendly greeting, stopped with

a mild look of expectancy, and received only a vicious and severe kick. The dog growled, then looked at his mistress; the kick was repeated and he sprang at the aggressor. In an instant Rue caught Bruno's collar and held him, saying:

"You are a coward or you would not have kicked my dog. You would like to strike me, if you dared. Although you are not a gentleman, and not entitled to be treated like a gentleman, you belong to our regiment. *I* ordered you to be swamped and scratched, so I will give you your revenge. I shoot better than you, but you fence well and the chances are equal. Will you try the foils? You can take the buttons off."

"My daughter!" And her father's arm was around her and she was led to the house. He showed that he was grieved and annoyed. He reasoned with her, ridiculed her outburst, and tried in all ways to make her see the enormity of her offence. When this failed to cool her temper he drew her to him, held her in his arms, and talked to her lovingly and tenderly, blaming himself for her rough training. This broke her stubbornness, and in a rush of repentant feeling she offered to apologize to the lieutenant.

"No, you shall not do that. You shall never violate your conscience through your affection for me. You are not sorry for the wrong—you are only sorry I am grieved."

"Yes, sir; but that is enough. I do dislike the dandy, but I did wrong to give that order to Bob. The men would risk any punishment to please me; so all the more it was selfish to send them where I did not go. I know they would charge the devil himself, if I bid them."

"I did not know you used such language. I did not believe you had learned such expressions. I trusted the regiment—its affection for you, its respect for me."

"Do not blame the men, papa. I heard Uncle Billy tell you that. The men never swear if they see me, but—I *have* caught some phrases in the garrison."

"Such as—?"

"Well, I don't swear wickedly. I say 'the devil' sometimes, and the other day when I cut my hand with Bruno's collar—"

"What then?"

"I did say—well, I swore. Uncle Billy heard me. He spoke to me about it and about mamma; so you see I have dropped it."

"I hear how you have dropped it."

"But, papa, about the men—I was the only one to blame. I wish you would put me in the guard-house and let off Bob and the others."

"And when you were out again I presume you would still insist upon a duel with Bradnor?"

"I would rather like it, but I suppose it can be arranged without that. If he will apologize for kicking Bruno I shall be perfectly willing to apologize for the mud and the briers."

Rue's ludicrous earnestness made further reproof impossible. But the result was worse than reproof. The next day Major Leszinksky wrote to arrange for her going to Philadelphia. She might stay at home until after Easter; with two months more of liberty she must perforce be content.

Bob and the men were released with a reprimand for their "stupidity as guides." Carson was the orator on that occasion.

The entire story was soon garrison property.

The swamp and the duel were too much for Bradnor. The ridicule of the "juniors" and the severely respectful demeanor of the men made life on the frontier (where so much depends on

friendly relations with associates) unendurable. He asked to be exchanged, and, that failing, resigned.

The last two months Rue passed at the fort brought her more of pain than happiness. It was a constant leave-taking which seemed to pull at every fibre of Rue's being. She was a product of the plains, and she instinctively dreaded the trammels of a more formal society. The stalwart troopers and rough border settlers were devoted to the child born and brought up in their own rugged way of life. But from the formalists of an older civilization she knew she could only expect a patronizing toleration. Every reproof, every suggestion of improvement she had heretofore received was put in the form of a comparison. There were in the far-off East models of deportment that she detested—correct and perfect patterns that made Rue despair of the future. So her grief grew with what it fed on, and a longing for solitude came upon her. She took lonely rides to outlying ranches and Indian lodges, until one evening, after a late return, her father, seeing the blown condition of her pony, inquired the distance she had gone and forbade her leaving the fort without an escort.

For the last two weeks of her stay at the fort, accompanied by Bob Stearns and "the squad," Rue was almost constantly in the saddle. The unrest and fever of grief were upon her, a wild yearning for escape from what she regarded as a coming imprisonment. She could only lose thought in the rush of a mad gallop, in the flying feet of a wild mustang, until even those hard riders found the following difficult. It was wonderful, their sympathy with her moods and her sorrow. Not a word of remonstrance was uttered, no matter into what difficulties her reckless disregard of paths led; always a subdued, respectful tone. Once when she left them, bidding them wait, and climbed the steep bluff, driven by the savage instinct that would hide pain, she dismounted and threw herself on the ground in a tempest of grief. The mustang started back to the fort; the men caught him and waited whilst Bob sought the unhorsed rider.

"Cap'n! Cap'n Rue!" he said softly, and when she looked up, through blinded eyes, it was to see great tears falling over his weather-beaten face.

"I was oneasy, Cap'n Rue, and thought I had

better come whar I mought hear you call, so be I was needed. You're lookin' mighty white and peaked lately. And the pity on it's a-wearin' all the good out-en the regiment. I wish we'd broke that pesky leftenant's neck the day we 'swamped' him, so be an' half on us had been court-martialled and shot for it. Then the major wouldn't a-got this school projec' in his head."

"It was not that—not altogether that, Bob—I need the school—papa is right to send me—and you fellows—must save him trouble when I am gone—I won't have any grumbling or insubordination among the men."

"No, Cap'n Rue."

"You will be good to my little sister—and teach her to ride, Bob—you taught me—make her strong and healthy—let her have my old pony—it's gentle—and—*talk of me to her sometimes*—you must never forget me—you—all—"

Here there was a complete double break, until, with a gasp and a broken sob, the girl stilled herself and led the way to where the men waited. The hardest of the wrench was over. That day was the burial of Rue's childhood.

In the beginning of the spring Rue was in her

place at school, a solitary child in that busy, miniature world. The heiress of the great Cartaret estate would have given it all for one wild ride over the rolling prairie; as for friendship, she had left that out there with "Bob Stearns and the squad," with the comrades of the camp. She had nothing in common with these well-bred, conventional young ladies; their conversation was to her an unknown tongue. She had, however, the quick perception of a savage, and felt that she was being scrutinized, and criticised, and judged. Her refuge was her pride, her shield her dogged will; so they thought her cold and haughty, when she was only shy and sorrow-stricken with a terrible homesickness, with a craving for the free, glad life she had left.

Day after day some new lesson was learned from human books. The shams and deceits of this little world of school were transparent to the inexperienced but truthful child. She had a boy's respect for truth, a boy's scorn of a lie; she could not understand those feminine twists of reasoning that accepted as eminently proper the polite deceptions of society. So out of her pride and her shyness Rue built up a wall of separation that was also a wall of defence. She

had been forced by her obedience to her father to give up the ways of life that delighted her. She would not be forced to adopt other ways that were distasteful, that were utterly repugnant to her. Moreover, she knew her father would forgive her even should she outrage the decorous dignity of varnished respectability with a wild protest against its shams.

Altogether this school was an evil in Rue's life. The fault was partly that she so antagonized her surroundings that she failed to see the good that modestly retired before the barriers she had built. The failure was partly her fault; it was also her misfortune. It supplemented all the evil of her early training with a greater evil—it made her distrustful of culture, of refinement; honesty must have a rugged exterior or it could not be honesty. To self-will and self-assertion, grown out of the old habit of command, was now added indifference to opinion, contempt of judgment, and utter scorn for the rules and conventionalities of society. She had so confounded the true and the false with this absurd classification, which recognized only extremes, that but for her father and her faith in him her life would have set itself in fruitless

opposition to all order, to all law. Her belief in her father was the anchor that held through it all.

Three years had passed when one morning Rue was sent for to the parlor. Her father was there, but aged and broken, his hair silvered; the strong man was bent with the burden of life. He pressed his daughter to his heart, and then put in her arms a delicate little girl clad in mourning.

"Her mother is dead, Rue, and I brought her to you. When I die she will have nothing, no one to look to but you. I know I can trust her with you, my daughter."

"She is your child, she is my sister; she is the Benjamin of our house. On my faith as your daughter, on my honor as my mother's child, I promise you to prefer her happiness to my own. If I ever fail in this, or swerve from it a hair's-breadth, may God desert me in my need!"

THE MODERN HAGAR.

VOLUME II.

BOOK SECOND—PART SECOND,

CONTINUED.

CHAPTER XXV.

"Let what is broken so remain:
The gods are hard to reconcile."

THE gathering in the rotunda was soon broken. The yachting party accepted Mrs. Hartley's invitation to an informal dinner; so did Grandison and Horry.

Carson's refusal was a courteous but inflexible excuse. He was "to meet the Leszinkskys, who were coming from Philadelphia in the evening train, and go on with them to 'The Cedars.'" Roane also declined the dinner, but said he

would come later after seeing the Leszinkskys and Carson off for Richmond.

At the door of the Senate gallery Carson took leave of Molly and her mother.

Our "lady of the hill" had grown more gracious. The inevitable son-in-law, after being received as a disagreeable fact, was finally taken into favor. Carson asked:

"Then I am to tell Leszinksky you will certainly come to 'The Cedars'? One week from to-day we shall be waiting at the station for the morning train."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "One week from to-morrow. Carisbrooke will not be with us until then, and I have had my lesson. One railroad accident has taught me to wait Carisbrooke's pleasure."

Carson. "If you will permit me I will be glad to come for you."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Thank you, no. We will not supersede Carisbrooke just yet." Relenting, she added with a smile: "You will come on duty later." Then she and Molly gave messages for the Leszinkskys, and adieux were said.

Walking down Pennsylvania Avenue, Roane asked abruptly:

"Carson, what has Hartley done? You will not even visit the Carisbrookes at his house; and I know Leszinksky will not permit Miss Rue to accept any of her cousin's invitations."

"I do not know positively that he has done anything; and Leszinksky always insists that I shall not speak my suspicion. But I do not mind telling you, Roane, that I think him an infernal scoundrel."

"Grandison told me you had some difficulty with him in Cincinnati in '56."

Carson's face had grown stern and set. He was silent for a few minutes, and then said:

"You remember the note we found in that dead man's pocket at Bouie's Hill?"

"Yes; and that you thought it proved the attack to be something more than a mere Indian border feud."

"I believe yet that it was. Mrs. Leszinksky—Rue's mother—offended Hartley mortally at the time of that affair of the quadroon. You remember the story; you must have seen the woman at Doctor Carisbrooke's."

"Yes. Grandison told me something of her history. Hartley sold her to a negro-trader in

Baltimore, who took her to Mississippi. She ran away, was insane or something, and Hartley repaid the Mississippian and freed her."

"Are you sure Hartley had sold her?"

"Yes; I was in Grandison's office when the woman came there with Dr. Carisbrooke, Leszinksky, and Horry. Hartley met them there."

"Stan never told me of that. He knew I would regard it as additional proof of Hartley's guilt—a fresh certificate of character. Why, Mrs. Leszinksky sold the woman to him that he might free her. She had his written promise to free her and her child—his child, the infernal hound! I am more than ever sorry I took my hands off his throat in Cincinnati."

"But about Bouie's Hill?"

"I feel morally sure he was the plotter of that villany."

"Carson, isn't that pure prejudice? What would he gain by that?"

"His wife would gain the Cartaret estate."

"She is the last woman in the world who would care for such gain."

"It is not a question of her, but of Hartley. I have no doubt of his guilt, nor of her truth and goodness. I know the Carisbrookes love her,

and I know that Stan esteems her highly; that he is sorry Rue cannot know her cousin more intimately. But his very estrangement from the Hartleys proves that he must believe ill of Hartley, although, to keep the peace, he meddled in my quarrel in Cincinnati and stopped a duel."

"I heard there was a difficulty, but I did not hear of any duel."

"If it had come to extremes I would have told you—would have called on you as a friend, for Leszinksky would have refused to be a second in a duel. Hartley affected high moral ground and would not fight. He was peaceful under insult; but I am not fool enough to believe that he forgets."

"How did it happen?"

"I had left Leszinksky at the Carisbrookes' and gone with my son to Oxford. Some package of my boy's was missing, and when I returned to Cincinnati I went to the Burnet to hunt up the luggage. In the hall I saw Hartley. He was standing in the door of one of the private rooms on Vine Street. I do not know just how it was—for I was conscious of neither thought nor action—but I had him by the throat, and I think most probably I should have for ever stopped

his breathing, when Leszinksky and Carisbrooke interfered. It was lucky for Hartley that it was Leszinksky. I would have made short work of it with any one else that had come between me and the scoundrel. But that one-armed old comrade! What could I do? I should have had to let go if it had been the devil himself I had by the throat. Not that the devil isn't a dashed sight better fellow than that mean whelp, whose dirty work and spotted little soul he must scorn."

"It did not end there?"

"Hartley would have been willing that it should. A crowd gathered — no matter how quiet or out of the way a place is, it's wonderful how quick a crowd will gather if there's a knock-down—but before we separated I said a few words that a coward would hardly fail to resent, and I made him understand I would wait to hear from him. I did wait—three whole days. Then I went to the Burnet House and waited, Leszinksky and Dr. Carisbrooke all the time trying to patch up the difficulty and urging that I was to blame, that I knew of no cause of quarrel. As if a man could not sometimes scent a cause in the very fact that hatred seems causeless. At last I promised Leszinksky that if I

could see Hartley I would say all I had to say in Dr. Carisbrooke's presence, and then, unless Hartley wished to fight, I would leave town. So it was settled."

"And you told him?"

"Of the affair at Bouie's Hill and my belief. Of course he protested his innocence. I told him I would insure the future in just one way: that if Rue died by any accident, any violence—no matter what that accident or violence might seem—I would kill him like a dog, if I had to search the world to find him. Since then I have felt easy about Rue. I do not think the scoundrel will hire more murderers for her while I live."

"What did he say afterward?"

"Nothing. He looked like a man in an ague when we left him."

"And Leszinksky—does he know?"

"He only knows that I accused Hartley of that attack and that Hartley pleaded not guilty. Neither Carisbrooke nor I told him of the way I took to insure Rue's life. But I can see that, in spite of his fear of being unjust, 'King Stan' distrusts Hartley yet. And there is another thing I suspect—Hartley has ill-treated his wife.

Dr. Carisbrooke hinted as much. He detests Hartley, but he has told Mrs. Carisbrooke nothing. He makes a sacrifice of his own feeling, and permits his wife and daughter to visit Mrs. Hartley. He told me that was at 'King Stan's' instance, adding that Kate's life was so unhappy that we must all think of her. You know how a woman's unhappiness would touch Leszinksky. Well, if you had known Mrs. Leszinksky—I mean Rue's mother — you would understand what his sympathy would be with her cousin's unhappiness."

Roane was silent; he asked no further question, but there was a flash of color across the sun-browned face that contrasted strangely with the frowning brow and the set look of the firm mouth. When Roane parted with Carson and the Leszinkskys, after promising to come to "The Cedars" with the Carisbrookes, he went to his rooms. An hour later he entered Mrs. Hartley's drawing-room. Dazzled by the light, charmed by the sound, he stopped in the doorway to listen to a fresh, sweet young voice which seemed to lead a chorus of whistling birds. The very air was vibrant with the melody of summer woods. Mrs. Carisbrooke motioned him to a

place beside her. Then he saw Molly at the piano playing an accompaniment to Miss Hilton's song:

"A robin whistled his dream to me—
Yesterday, yesterday;
He whistled and sang his dream to me—
Tra la la la!
Whistled and sang till the wild wood rang
With the echoing clang
Of his roundelay.

"A bluebell rang its sweet chime for me—
Yesterday, yesterday;
Tremblingly rang its sweet chime for me—
Tra la la la!
Tremblingly rang what the robin sang
In the carolling clang
Of his roundelay.

"A wild rose blushed and whispered to me—
Yesterday, yesterday;
Whispered and blushed its secret to me—
Tra la la la!
Whispered and blushed till the daisy flushed
And a zephyr hushed
At the roundelay.

"What was the secret the flowers told me—
Yesterday, yesterday?
The secret the bird whistled to me—
Tra la la la!

Flowers and bird? Oh! the wild wind heard
Every word, every word
Of that roundelay."

The mocking laugh of the wandering zephyr, the whistle of the robin, filled the room with fairy music. And when the singer turned to bow her acknowledgment of the enthusiastic plaudits Roane thought, "Titania's self could not have been more beautiful." Even Mrs. Carisbrooke's light touch of his arm seemed a rough awakening, a rude recall from the court of Oberon.

"You saw the Leszinkskys?"

"Yes; and promised to go with you and Miss Molly to 'The Cedars' next week."

Horry, standing near them, resumed a political argument which the song had interrupted. He appealed to Roane to settle a disputed point in the early history of the tariff. This appeal drew Roane and also Mrs. Carisbrooke, whose education and training had been solid and thorough, into the discussion. It was almost impossible for man or woman to avoid these vexed and vexing questions that week in Washington. The patriots and the wise statesmen—I fear there were but few of either—touched the fever pulse

of the nation with awe at its approaching dissolution. But their reticence was not copied by the general public.

The men with least brains were the loudest brawlers; and women who could not understandingly have emphasized the false prefatory sentence in the Declaration of Independence now ruffled their flounces at touch of each grave question, and referred to the Constitution as they expounded the rights and duties of States with the same easy, graceful, impertinent flippancy with which they would have discussed a character or given a critical summary of the last new novel.

Horry had found a foeman worthy of his steel in an enthusiastic disciple of the new Republican party, which had swept the North in the elections of '54 and '55, and which now presented a solid front to a divided Democracy. From opposite points of view the foemen were both bitter revolutionists.

Horry. "The tariff of '33 was a Machiavelian compromise to which the North never intended to adhere. This was proved in '42 when duties on manufactures were advanced. Since then the fiscal system of the nation has been persis-

tently protective, which is an unjust discrimination against the agricultural States, whose productions are the basis of all foreign commerce. The Union is an incubus upon the West and the South. It is time it was broken. For one I am glad we are about to bury the foul corpse."

Republican. "And I, for different reasons, am glad to 'let the Union slide'; I agree with Banks there. I am ready for extremes. Dissolve the Union, bring on civil war—you can neither foil nor intimidate us; our purpose is as fixed as the eternal pillars of heaven. Three-quarters of a century hence, if the South retains slavery, she will be to the North what Poland is to Russia, Cuba to Spain, and Ireland to England."

Horry. "The glittering phrases of abolition prophecy are philanthropical bank-bills which are discounted by the utterers. Plain common sense is hard cash; it has a fixed value and is always current. The North imported the negro, grew rich from the slave-trade, and then got rid of its unprofitable property without loss. It has never offered the South emancipation with compensation. Try that."

Republican. "The idea is preposterous, the

suggestion criminal. What! feed the curs of slavery to make them rich at our expense?"

Horry. "They enriched you."

Republican. "They have disgraced us until we blush to confess we are Americans. The Union is a concession on the part of the North. We, through a sentimental weakness, have tolerated the South in the Union which they now threaten. Let them break that Union. We lose nothing, they will lose everything. The association with, the protection of, the North has been their palladium. We will gladly withdraw our protection. But they are only talking like braggarts; they could not be kicked out of the Union."

Roane. "If your party wins you will find that they will go; and the North will resist their going. Yankee reasoning is a thing of the ledger; its philanthropy is put on and off with its Sunday clothes, but the account-book is carried in the week-day pocket. Extremists may drive us to leave, but the same extremists will try to prevent our leaving. The cohorts of Pharaoh will follow us to bring us back into Egypt. But there is the Red Sea."

And he pointed to the Potomac. His impressive manner commanded attention and silence.

From the open window they saw the broad river, and over on the heights lights were gleaming from behind the shadowy columns of the house at Arlington.

The New-Yorkers were about to leave, and the Northern advocate bowed to his antagonists and went to make his adieux to his host and hostess.

Mrs. Carisbrooke, looking at Horry and Roane, said: "It is coming."

Horry. "What is coming?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "The end of all things. You will get your own way, you disunionists of the North and the South. You pull from opposite extremes, but the break and the suffering is to affect the people who stand between. My house will surely fall in the general wreck."

Roane. "You have a chance yet, and a strong one. The Democracy may win."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "That is a house divided against itself. The last hope I had died at Charleston."

Roane. "The resurrection of your hope may be there. If the Democracy should be defeated South Carolina will lead us into a new and a more homogeneous confederation."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "What has South Carolina to do with me? I am an Ohioan."

Roane. "Before that a Virginian?"

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "No; I transferred myself and Virginia transferred the land. Carisbrooke is thoroughly de-stated and rein-stated. We are Ohioans. And now we have a Northern son-in-law. You may yet see your red-headed friend heading a column to cross your Red Sea."

Horry. "Possibly. We recognize the fact that a man's first duty is to his State."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "I recognize the fact that the times are out of joint. O cursed spite, there's not a man alive can set 'em right!—at least honest men cannot and the politicians will not. The wise men are all dead, and Wisdom goes a-mourning in petticoats."

Horry. "She has Folly in the same dress to keep her in countenance. I heard her to-day talking like Bellona."

Mrs. Carisbrooke. "Yes; there are a few asses who do not wear the regulation dress. But Molly comes with 'Beauty' to say 'good-night.'"

Molly was going with the yachting party for the next day's expedition to Mount Vernon.

CHAPTER XXVI.

"Love in a hut, with water and a crust,
Is—Love forgive us!—cinders, ashes, dust:
Love in a palace is perhaps at last
More grievous torment than a hermit's fast—
That is a doubtful tale from fairy land,
Hard for the non-elect to understand."

WHEN Molly returned from Mount Vernon Miss Hilton came with her and Mrs. Cartaret. Before the Carisbrookes left Washington Mai Hilton was a recognized relative of the Hartleys. The Hartleys' handsome young kinsman had also taken an assured place in the family. The old money-gatherer, from whom Captain Hartley had inherited millions, had left his sister's grandson three hundred thousand dollars, to which were attached two conditions: he would forfeit the inheritance if he married a wife whose fortune did not equal his own or if he remained unmarried at thirty-five years of age. The forfeited estate would then revert to Simon Hartley's heirs-at-law, Mrs. Cartaret and her brother. This con-

tingent bequest was the only one the old man made to Mrs. Cartaret. He had given her shelter after George Hilton's death, but she had been so unfortunate in that marriage that he resented her misfortune as a personal injury. By covert hints and sneering allusions to faults through which she had suffered he had made her dependent position intolerable.

The marriage with Judge Cartaret had changed all that. It was in every respect a desirable alliance. It reinstated his niece in the opinion of the millionaire, as it did in the good things of this world. It gave her honors, dignities, and troops of friends. It would also have given her a large share in the fortune of her now proudly-attached uncle but for his sudden death—a death that insured Hartley the inheritance. For the only will that could be found was the will Simon Hartley had made the week after the news came of that disaster at sea and while his niece was still the widow of George Hilton.

Mrs. Cartaret was a woman of fierce temper and many faults, but she was capable of the most intense and devoted attachments. She had married George Hilton in the face of her uncle's threats and her brother's remonstrance. She

had clung to him through disgrace, and after his death had loyally defended his memory. Neither uncle nor brother, although both were given to sneer and taunt, had ever dared utter unveiled condemnation of the dead. Even implied reproach to her grief had been met with stormy outbreaks of indignant resentment.

She had always been devoted to her brother. They were left orphans at an early age, and she was the elder. But her attachment to her brother had a hard wrench that Christmas at Oakhill when the news of Tom Cartaret's death was so maladroitly told to Judge Cartaret. From that moment she was tortured by suspicions which she vainly tried to banish. Her affection for Kate grew stronger, and would have been developed into an antagonism to her brother but for the hold he had upon her through her affection for the child that she had adopted as a relative.

Mai's beauty and helplessness had first attracted Mrs. Cartaret. Lucy's unmerited suffering had brought the child near to her in her pity for its mother. She had tried to trace Lucy after her disappearance, and then learned the story of the sale of the woman in Baltimore. Mrs. Carta-

ret had seen the trader who bought Lucy, and heard of her suffering on the route to New Orleans, of her illness and her long stay in the hospital, of her recovery from that illness, which left her a harmless monomaniac—claiming all suffering children as her own (her child was ill when it was taken from her) and nursing them with tireless devotion—of her sale to a planter near Vicksburg, and her sudden disappearance. Further than that all trace was lost.

Mrs. Cartaret, believing that Lucy had drowned herself (she was last seen standing on the river bank), redoubled her care for the child through pity for the dead mother.

Hartley had grown more openly considerate of his daughter because of his belief that her mother was dead. Not that he had ever thought to pity her mother; he simply regarded her as an obstruction, now happily removed.

The surname Mrs. Cartaret had given Mai and her appearance freed the child from apparent taint of mixed blood. Mrs. Cartaret's ward, as George Hilton's cousin, was alone in the world. The world only seeks or acknowledges a relationship when it is profitable or creditable. And this name was stained by disgrace. Besides, the

child had no fortune. She was only Mrs. Cartaret's ward and pensioner.

To one guilty soul she was a constant threat and a constant promise. Her father really loved Mai; she was the first human being he had ever really loved. He had had a selfish liking for his sister; she had always smoothed the difficult places for him as far as she could. Careless of her own interests, after George Hilton's death she had never forgotten her brother's; she had concealed from her uncle, at cost to herself, her brother's shortcomings. She had stinted herself out of the very moderate income the old miser gave her, to assist her brother. The old man was watchful and suspicious; he observed all her expenditures, and when she could not, or would not, explain this default in her income he explained it to himself in a manner not creditable to her. And to shield her brother she endured unjust and harsh judgment. But she did not bear it patiently, and that impatience counted against her and for her brother.

In Captain Hartley's rare visits uncle and nephew had neither time nor occasion for difference. The old man's family pride and feeling, so potent against his niece, were engaged in Cap-

tain Hartley's behalf. And then, thanks to his sister's timely aid, the nephew never asked or hinted any need of money. In fact, he had once refused a proffered loan ; that refusal had much to do with making him his uncle's heir. His sister asked too often. And since George Hilton's death her uncle could not understand such requests. They were complied with, but in a reduced measure. The sum asked for was rarely given, but caution against extravagance was not withheld ; in that the miser was prodigal. And so Mrs. Cartaret secured the Hartley fortune for her brother.

To go back to Hartley and his daughter. His love for her was daily growing stronger. It was not yet sufficiently unselfish to be purifying, but it made him cautious. He resolved to risk nothing in the future. Carson was an argument, and a weighty one, in the affair of the Cartaret estate, but Mai was also in his mind. To risk himself was to risk Mai's interest, and that he would not risk. He was selfish for his child, and through that he put restraint on revenge and cupidity and was prudent. Prudence made him fearful. In the pursuit of the plan that had so long led him into

criminal paths he had acquired a certain recklessness which is, indeed, the sole element in the daring of crime. But now there was nothing to dare, and so there was everything to fear. Inaction forced him to look backward; and looking backward, he saw where concealments which he had fancied secure either were or were likely to be uncovered.

Carson's suspicion was the sword of Damocles, and Carson's threat the hair by which it was suspended. For Hartley knew that the threat was retrospective. If the suspicion of the resolute soldier was confirmed beyond shadow of doubt—and it might be—Carson would be quick to settle that past account. In the mention of it only Rue's name had been used, but there were two ghostly shadows behind Rue. Let suspicion become certainty, then Mrs. Carson and Willy would be avenged.

Cursing himself for having set an enemy upon his track, Hartley would sometimes think how much better he had managed with the Cartarets. But it was only sometimes that he thought of them. There was no danger now from the Cartarets; and, now that he had grown familiar with crime, danger would have to rouse con-

science from its lethargy before it would listen to either remorse or repentance.

The accident to Tom Cartaret, the shock that killed Judge Cartaret, rarely disturbed Hartley's recollection—never unless his wife gave him fresh cause of offence. Then, in a sort of involuntary mechanical reckoning, he would count them as two pieces off the board that might have lost him the game he so coveted. As to Kate herself, she had fallen into a trap that he had set. He had paid some debts of Tom's—debts of honor—had settled a mortgage that burdened Belleview, had paid his sister's marriage settlement, and—the thing that touched Kate most of all—had taken up a note of Judge Cartaret's which was secured by a chattel mortgage that included every negro on the plantation. Very proudly Kate offered to release the entire property to him; she insisted that his outlay should be repaired. Then he mentioned a suit Judge Cartaret had in the Supreme Court—a disputed succession to some property of his father's brother, who had resided in Alabama—which Hartley said he was confident would be decided in favor of the Virginian Cartarets, and which would pay all, or nearly all, he had advanced; and he added that if Kate would

transfer to him all future right of inheritance through the Cartarets he would be fully paid. The deed of transfer was made and signed after Kate insisted to the lawyers and the notary who came to witness the signature that she understood fully the entire transaction and had received full value for all she signed away.

Never having counted the chances of Rue's inheritance or of her own succession to Colonel Tom Cartaret's estate, Kate did not know that she had relinquished to Captain Hartley a possible ownership of "The Cedars."

The arrangement of all these matters had dragged through the ten years since Judge Cartaret's death.

Hartley had very reluctantly agreed to accept the payment his wife offered, and his sister firmly believed, and convinced Kate of her belief, that he had behaved very generously, and had finally accepted the transfer in order that Belleview and the negroes might be secured beyond cavil to Kate, as her father's will had provided.

In the early spring the deed of transfer was signed. From the first moment there had been mention made of this manner of settling the in-

debtedness of her father's estate to Captain Hartley, Kate was anxious and insistent to have it done. Knowing that her father's will had so placed his estate that Hartley could have no present or future interest in it, she feared the long-standing debt would embarrass her at every turn. And when, some six weeks after the deed of transfer had been signed, the Supreme Court decided the "Cartaret will case" in favor of Judge Cartaret's heirs, Kate was delighted at her release from money obligation to the man whose name she bore--the man to whom, from a forced sense of duty, she paid a certain outward respect, although every additional year convinced her, with fresh reason, of the impossibility of any real reconciliation that would bring about their reunion. Kate's isolation, the absence of those homely but sweet domestic ties which are so much in the daily count of happiness, the vacancy in the life where affection was not (her tolerant regard for Mrs. Cartaret was scarcely an affection), had left her in that collapse of personal interest, that absence of ballast, in her own life which so surely drives a weak woman downward.

But Kate was in no sense weak; her faults had

not that excuse. The hate that shut out love had found an ally in her pride—an ally which effectually barred out of her life the idle caprices of an unoccupied heart. At any period the life of the coquette would have been impossible to her. She was neither vain, petty, nor untruthful; she lacked the three essentials which make the species. But a hardening process even more fatal than the heartlessness of the coquette was nearly complete when she met Leszinksky. She was slowly but surely losing that intangible sweetness, that aroma of goodness, which is as perceptible to the moral sense as the perfume of the rose is to the physical sense. She would have always carried her head erect in the face of all the conventional respectabilities that decorate this world and often outrage heaven; but she would have died unrepentant and almost unconscious of her sin in keeping pride and hate alive through an unforgiven wrong. This petrescence began the moment she recognized the living original of the pictured Hagar under the vine-covered arbor at Oakhill. It half melted in the rays of her child's eyes; but those rays were too soon withdrawn. Then Tom's death and her father's chilled all the warmth out of

life. But the warmth came again at the touch of a wounded bird.

The lowliest messenger, if he so touches the heart that it throbs in its casing of clay with a divine pity for the suffering of any earth-born creature, has brought the promethean fire which proves him a messenger of the gods.

A new life commenced for Kate from that day. Yet the sacred fire was but a spark, and even with the kindling of the spark came a new danger. Kate had loved so little, now she might love too much. And she did love Leszinksky with that perfect, trustful love which is instantly and unwittingly given. She was no more conscious of wrong or ashamed in the revelation of this feeling to him than a child would have been ashamed of the expression of its preference. She had kissed his hand as a devotee might kiss the hand of a saint. It was love born of reverence, and both love and reverence were strangely new guests in this great heart which had so grand a capacity for loving.

The loyal and open expression of each thought and feeling as it was born into consciousness was witness of Kate's truth and of her purity. Recognizing her love, giving it full expression, yet

saying that because of that she dare not accept Leszinksky's offered protection, was, in an inverse sense, the noblest expression of that perfect love which casteth out fear. Neither was there the shyness of any shame in her silence afterward. It was simply that she had said all, that she accepted nothing. She had neither hope nor thought of his loving her. He might give her the same pitying, protecting care he had given the wounded bird. He would do his best for her, she was sure of that—his best because of her need and because of her cousin Margaret. Then she thought of the wife who had taken her cousin's place. Could there be such capacity for loving in the heart that one might love twice? Yet in all her thought of him at that time there was absolutely no thought of herself.

But later, after she had known Rue—and with what joy she always remembered that she and Rue were instantly friends, as well as kinswomen, when they met at the Carisbrookes'—Rue had talked to her of her mother, but had avoided mention of her stepmother's name. Then Kate did think of herself. She thought of the wife who had given up all to marry him, and she thought of the delight of such sacrifice. Through

that Kate learned the danger of her thought. Then she resolved to keep love so pure that she would not blush to tell it to men and angels. After the parting with these newly-found relatives the spark kindled into flame, and its warmth went from the woman's heart into her life. She put her love into the visible form of human sympathy.

There was no outward show or observance of good works, but day by day the shadowy rounds of the ladder were being lifted heavenward.

As I said, Kate put her love in her daily life. She also put duty there. Yet under all was a subordinate thought that strengthened and comforted her. She would never speak her love again to him, but some time, in the future outside of time and the bonds of the flesh, she would tell it all to Margaret. Margaret would understand.

But, in one of those occult mysteries of sense and feeling that only a woman or a man with the feminine intuition of a poet could understand, the very love and sense of duty which ruled her life, and not only influenced but led her to sacrifice, ruled Hartley out of the sphere of her own personality. She had forgiven him, but of

necessity it must always be a barren forgiveness. The marriage-tie was eternally broken. Kate would make any worldly sacrifice for the man who had been her husband. In fact, she would have courted such sacrifice. She would have endured anything for his good—anything except his presence in her life as her husband. That she could not endure. The narrowness of the circle that bound them to the same house made this feeling more intense.

Their divorce was all the more complete because human law had never pronounced it. And because of the entirety of this divorce Kate grew considerate of Hartley's happiness.

Her meeting with Mai was so purely unexpected that she would probably have failed in the law she had made unto herself but for the eyes so like her child's. That likeness brought a burst of feeling. If she had known she was about to meet Hagar's child—in her thought she always called Lucy "Hagar"—it would have been different. She would have been kind and courteous, she would have made the child welcome, for the child's sake, for its father's happiness, and as some compensation for the wrong she believed she had brought upon Lucy. But now Mai

would always be personally dear to her. Kate could never go back of that first greeting. She would now always see in Mai the sister of her child.

Yet this brought her no nearer Mai's father. If anything it was another infinitesimal wedge of separation.

All that summer vacation the girl was with the Hartleys. They left Washington for Oakhill—after a short visit which Kate made to Belleview—as soon as that long, heated session closed. Mai and Bradnor were not so much guests as members of the household on the Hudson.

Kate was trying to settle old scores with her conscience in her devotion to Mai's good. She soon understood Hartley's views as to Bradnor, and as much as she dared, although she hated match-making, she furthered his wish.

The girl's childlike expression of her liking for the handsome kinsman made this easy for Kate. The summer passed uneventfully at Oakhill.

Mai went back to school in the fall, and Bradnor had not spoken. The girl seemed content. Kate could see Hartley's disappointment. Then she puzzled herself in a vain effort to understand whether Bradnor did not care for the girl, or were prudently waiting until the time should be more fit.

CHAPTER XXVII.

"Others shall right the wrong—
Finish what I begin,
And all I fail of win."

SELECTIONS FROM A BUNDLE OF OLD LETTERS.

(*Mrs. Carisbrooke to the Doctor, July* 5, 1860.)

"YOU will be surprised, O supreme chief! that your womenkind are still at 'The Cedars.'

"Steenie was quite ill on Monday. That delay and 'King Stan's' persuasion induced me to telegraph a change of date and an order for our letters to our waiting landlord at the White Sulphur.

"The letters were promptly forwarded. So I have your Chicago musings. I am still angry at your throwing us over to go there.

"Molly has her present from her Uncle Robert. Did you know of the gift? A check for five thousand dollars on the Bank of Virginia —an over-generous sum for the purpose. It is rather too much to spend in wedding raiment

when a girl marries a penniless 'sojer-man.' But Molly is the child of her father, and so my lovely Lady Prudence decided to spend one thousand, and with the balance make a first payment on the Avondale place which she has just bought from Horry. It is the corner near us, with the three walnut-trees, and Horry has been very generous in the matter. You know they have for a long time jestingly talked of her intended purchase. As soon as she opened Robert's letter, check in hand, she turned to Horry, and the bargain was concluded and the first payment made. So your daughter is châtelaine of 'The Walnuts.'

"Talking of châtelaines, I have a queer bit of news to tell. The mistress of Belleview came from Washington to her 'seat on the Chickahominy' to dispense gifts and justice before going to Oakhill for the summer. We learned that fact through her neighbors, the Shirleys. They dined here on the 1st and brought Miss Anne Esmond's excuses. She and her brother Harry were staying with Mrs. Hartley, who was alone at Belleview. It was embarrassing news for 'King Stan.'

"With all his dislike or disapproval of Hart-

ley—I do not suppose 'King Stan' could dislike even any thing so little human as Hartley—he could not be discourteous to his daughter's cousin. After much private pow-wowing with our admirable prospective son-in-law, and after a grave consultation with Colonel Roane—who I could see out of the corner of my eye was an advocate of a peace-and-propriety arrangement—peace and propriety won the day.

"On Tuesday Molly and I drove over to Belleview with her high mightiness the 'Princess of the Cedars.' Horry was our escort. Neither Leszinksky nor Carson would put foot where it could be construed as a visit of courtesy to Hartley, and something kept Roane away. I cannot just tell whether it was dislike or over-liking. Of course you will frown at this, but I think he does admire Kate and would give scant measure of mourning if Hartley should go to his fathers. You see I interlard my news with gossip.

"A twelve-mile morning drive in old colonial style—a coach drawn by four thoroughbreds—over Virginian roads and across the rough logs that bridge Virginian gullies, so tortured my back and enraged my nerves that I gladly accepted Kate's invitation to sleep at Belleview, especially as I

was to be paid for my complaisance—to my spine. My stay insured Kate's acceptance of Rue's invitation to visit 'The Cedars.'

"What a puzzle Rue is! She can be, and is, the sweetest and simplest of girls; but the maiden of seventeen can just as readily freeze into the haughtiest *grande dame* of the Leszinksky line. What a queen she would have made for Poland if she had lived a century sooner!

"Warsaw would have worshipped her as a goddess. I have never seen her on one of those famous Cartaret thoroughbreds, which she rides so well and fearlessly, without thinking how she would look at the head of the Polish legion. If the Bonaparte had known Rue, if she had been born the daughter and not the great-granddaughter of old King Stanislaus, in spite of the Mohammedan mother the king-maker would have established a modern Semiramis in the Polish capital.

"What a pity it is that people slip out of the century to which they are akin! If Rue had not fallen, in the chrysalis state, out of the niche in which she belonged, she might have been a Polish empress and conqueror of the Cossacks.

"But to go back to our visit to Belleview:

"The Shirleys were ill-informed in one particular: Kate had not come alone to the classic banks of the Chickahominy. She had brought 'Beauty' with her. The Beauty you did not see, because you failed to come to Washington. You will not tell me all you know, but I am sure 'Beauty' is Captain Hartley's daughter—his and Lucy's. She has Hartley's eyes, and there is something of Lucy too. I never made out all the likeness until I saw the Hoyts at church last Sunday.

"You are very wise and very close-mouthed, my master; but I am neither blind nor stupid. I can see some little distance into a millstone when it is translucent.

"So Lucy's father was Hoyt, the gambler. I remember perfectly what he was like. You have heard me tell the story of Grandmamma Archer's English horses—how they got frightened one day in Richmond at a boy's kite, and, turning suddenly, threw the driver from his seat and ran away with the carriage full of us children. Well, that man Hoyt, the gambler, was the man who risked his life to save us. He caught the horses and held to them, although they lifted him from the ground and carried him nearly half a square.

I saw it all. I leaned out of the window to see —leaned so far that I fell out just as he did stop them.

"I have never forgotten Hoyt. Twice after that rescue he was out at grandmamma's. To tell you the truth, I think I was in love with him before I knew you. He must have been my first love. I was only twelve years old when he was killed. But I did not know Lucy was his child until I saw the Hoyts last Sunday—I mean the gambler's brother's children. One of them resembled my first love, and 'Beauty' resembles that very one. Suddenly Lucy's *Sunday name*—the one I had never heard, but the one I had seen on her free papers, which I am happy to tell you I did examine—flashed into my memory, and flashed a very clear light into one of those mysteries you have made such a pother about.

"It would have economized time and trouble if you had told me several things, and it would also have saved the wear and tear of mental study and painstaking detective construction.

"Take warning, my dear. It is better to trust me. I will keep close what you confide; but I will use my own discretion about my discoveries. There are two or three more points that are cost-

ing me thought, though there are others that I have already unravelled.

"The truth is, a man never does know how to keep a secret; he is a very ostrich in his manner of hiding—that is, if any one is tracking him. I know a man can hold his tongue. You have remarkable power of restraint in that. But, being a man, you do not know the thousand ways in which a secret is involuntarily told.

"Now that my conscience is relieved, and you have had your shortcomings shown you, I will get back to my story.

"Rue was delighted to visit her cousin Kate, and charmed with the warm welcome she got. There *is* something in the tie of blood, for the proud lady and the haughty young princess gushed into warmest friendship.

"Then the ride and my spine were up for discussion; and the arrangement was all complete for that day's stay and Kate's coming to 'The Cedars' with me the next day, together with the 'young friend,' name not mentioned, who had come with her from Washington, and the Esmonds'. But just then the entrance of the Esmonds with that 'young friend' stopped the gush and petrified the princess.

"Rue did courteously unbend to the Esmonds, but she was royally icy to 'Beauty.' Kate's look of appeal melted her somewhat, and the proper invitations were properly given to her Philadelphia school-mate, *Miss Hilton.* Miss Hilton was glad to accept—too glad! She is more a *Hartley* than a *Hoyt.* My gambler would have thrown such an invitation at the head of the giver.

"But Miss Hilton accepted. Miss Hilton is here at 'The Cedars'; and so is my Kate.

"And my Kate—my Kate! O Carisbrooke, what a gossip you will say I am! But I do wish Captain Hartley was removed to paradise, which I am sure is a better wish than he deserves and a finer place than he will ever see. But I will stop just here. You have secrets. My only secrets are my thoughts and my discoveries. They are my mysteries.

"But I will tell you how we kept the glorious Fourth at 'The Cedars.' Think of it—it may be the last we shall ever keep in Virginia.

"For, O Carisbrooke! this secession fever is spreading and spreading. People have taken it that we would have thought fever-proof. The Shirleys and the Esmonds are rabid. Roane

is in the crisis of the delirium. Horry is a sympathizing Northern assistant helping his very utmost to inoculate the Virginians. And oh! and oh! 'King Stan' has the disease. He has it so mildly that there is method in his madness. He judges the North fairly—which is more than the rabid can do—and he deplores the factious spirit which is rending the nation in twain. Because he is just and honest, and calm and truthful, he is more to be feared as a power that will roll Virginia secessionward than a cohort of these breezy orators, who, I pray heaven, talk more than they will ever fight.

"But we have one little bit of comfort in 'Red-head'—he is loyal to the Union.

"The sachem from the Illinois, though he says but little, says that little well.

"It is strange for Carson to take sides against Leszinksky. I said as much to him. And I think better of him for his frank explanation. He told me that in the beginning of the talk of secession he was inclined to take sides with the South; that, being a Democrat, his conviction was in favor of the right of secession; but that 'King Stan' had urged upon him his duty to his State. And so our beloved son-in-law, through

the wisdom of States-rightsism, will stay with his section.

"A little because of the obstinacy of women, and just a little to try a patriotic missionary enterprise, I proposed an old-fashioned spread-eagle celebration of the Fourth of July, that it might be at least a remembrance for the future.

"Roane and Horry gave cynical assent; Leszinksky a very cordial but very solemn consent. Red-head was enthusiastic. He had the flag up at daybreak, and, thinking it something uncommon, all the uninvited neighbors came as lookers-on.

"Leszinksky read the Declaration of Independence. Carson made a very manly and sensible speech, which Roane was gracious enough to characterize as 'a model of soldierly common sense and good taste.' Mai sang the 'Star-Spangled Banner' as I never have heard it sung and never shall hear it sung again by any one but her, unless United States patriotism is practised in paradise.

"Kate, and Molly, and Anne Esmond, and I cried like simpletons.

"Rue's eyes shone like stars, and her cheeks

and lips were scarlet. How martial music must have stirred the blood of those old Leszinkskys!

"'King Stan' was very pale. But 'Red-head'? Why, 'Red-head' nearly split his throat with wild 'hurrahs.' And Horry, and Roane, and Harry Esmond, and all the multitude applauded to the echo.

"I do not like Miss Hilton over-much. But I wipe out the dislike from this day. She has one great gift: she is one of earth's rarest singers.

"To-morrow Kate goes back to Belleview. The next day they start to Washington, and then to Oakhill. They have promised to visit us at Christmas. We all leave for the White Sulphur next week. Steenie is much better. I trust the mountain-air will give her strength. I am devoted to the lovely child, and so is Rue. Molly spoils her; and, for that matter, so do all. I expect a letter to meet me at the White Sulphur."

("*From Miss Hilton at Belleview, July* 17, *to Miss Rachel Pyle at Philadelphia.*)

"My *darling, precious* Miss Pyle: I have had *such a delightful* time since I last wrote you! Cousin Julia sent your *dear, sweet letter* here to me. But as you wished *me* to write you a regu-

lar *journal of my vacation*, I *must* go back to the week of our visit to *Mount Vernon*, where I saw the tomb that contains the *honored* and *revered* remains of the *greatest and best man* that ever deigned to *protect* and *bless our country*. After standing in *silent awe* before that *altar* of *patriotism* I came back to Washington with Cousin Julia, and Molly Carisbrooke, and the *elegant* Mr. Bradnor. We were all invited to make a visit to Captain Hartley, and Mrs. Hartley *insisted* on *my* going with them to their *place on the Hudson* for the summer, which I *gladly* consented to do. I knew Madame Detontville would be *very willing* to let me go for the *whole vacation*, as she is paid by the year for *me*, and also for the Manapanes, who are orphans like *myself*. Last year she was only *too pleased* when Cecelia Manapane was invited to stay with that *queer old uncle* who lives at Kennett.

"But for my *journal*. I described to you as well as *words could* Molly Carisbrooke's poky, red-headed lover. When I saw him *kiss* her in that *brazen public* manner I thought I *should* go through the floor. It *is* such a strange match for an only daughter; and Cousin Julia says the Carisbrookes *sont très riches et bien comme il faut*.

"They are to be married some time next winter. Mrs. Hartley is going to Cincinnati to visit the Carisbrookes *Christmas;* they have also invited *me*, and I have promised to go. I suppose the wedding will be a *grand* affair. Cousin Julia will arrange to get leave for me from Madame Detontville to go to Cincinnati *Christmas*, and also for the *wedding.* If it was not that I might not afterwards be asked to the *wedding* I would rather stay in *Washington* Christmas with Cousin Julia. She has to stay to *receive;* and Washington is *so nice*, and the Hartleys live in *splendid* style. Don't you think it *very queer* I have never been invited to them before, when *Captain Hartley* is my guardian? Cousin Julia has explained to me that *she* did not like to take charge of *my affairs.* I know there must have been *something wrong* about *her husband.* She asked me never to speak of *him* here, or of the *Hiltons!* But I mean to find out what I can. If there is any *disgrace* it will not hurt *me. Her husband* was only a distant relation of *my father's.* She told me that. But she will not tell me anything of *my mother's family*, except that she was a Spaniard my father married in Cuba, and

that I was born in Cuba. I have asked her all I *could*, but there must be *some mystery*, she is *so* anxious to change the subject. But she did ask me about my early recollection. I told her, of *course*, what I remembered about being at *sea* when I was a tiny little thing, and all about the *sisters in Montreal*. I wonder if that sea-trip was *when I came from Cuba?* But it seems to me I remember a *great river*, and a *beautiful garden*, and a *grapery* before that, and people; but I did not tell Cousin Julia all *that*. Sometimes it seems to me that I remember Cousin Julia in the garden. I *do* remember another woman, *who was my nurse*. When that woman *Lucy* came to me—when the scarlet fever broke out at Madame Detontville's—I thought *she* reminded me of my old nurse. She came twice afterward when I was ill. *You* were not with madame then. The last time was in the vacation. I had been walking all day in the sun, and I fainted on *Chestnut Street*. There was *only* Cecelia Manapane and one of the little children with me. It had happened that Lucy saw me fall; I do not know why *she* was on Chestnut Street. I was ill and delirious a long time. I can scarcely remember anything, but I

do remember seeing Cousin Julia, and also *Captain Hartley*, I do not know how often. But Lucy was *always there;* and so I got her mixed up *more than ever* with my old nurse. The week I came to *myself* two or three of the girls had come back. *Rue Leszinksky* had been back some time. That was before her stepmother died, and then she *did not go home;* she had been to the sea-shore with one of the teachers. Well, she is *very fond* of Lucy. *Just like her* —proud as a peacock to *white people*, and *great friends* with a colored *woman*. She *did* help Lucy take care of *me;* and I would have been *thankful* but for what she said to me that *spoilt it all*. It was one day when I was sitting up, and *Lucy* said I had been up too long. I would not go to bed, just to show her *her* place. I was tired of her and *indignant* at her presumption. I knew she had been kissing my *hands*, and *even my face*, when I was ill. I suppose I *did* sit up too long, for I *nearly* fainted, and Rue helped Lucy put me in bed. Rue went after some cologne or something, and Lucy commenced to kiss me, calling me her '*own precious child.*' I asked her then if she had not been my nurse when I was a baby. But she shook all over, and

began crying out: 'My child! My own child! Don't you know I am your *mother*, *your own mother?*' Then I told her to go away and never come near me again; that she was telling a *wicked lie;* that I would rather be ill and *die* than have a *negro* for a *mother.* I pushed her away, when she kept on begging me to remember her. I was *really angry then*, and I suppose I *did* call her a *wicked woman* and several other things. She ran away, and I never saw her again. But just think of *Rue Leszinksky taking it up* and telling *me* that I was an *ungrateful, despicable creature;* that I knew Lucy was a harmless woman, who had lost her only child; that Lucy *could* not be my mother, for I was not '*true or faithful* enough to be the *child of so good a woman.*' I have never liked the *nasty, proud thing* since. But you *will* be surprised to hear that I *have* visited her. Mrs. Hartley brought me here to her old home—'*The Belleview Estate*' it is called. *You* would be shocked here every day, for we are waited on by *slaves;* though I must say I like them better than I do *Northern colored people*, they are so *respectful* and *attentive.* And you know *you* say you would never have colored ser-

vants *in the North*, that they are too *impudent* and worthless. But if you did not think *slavery* such a *sin* I am sure *you would like* such a maid as Mrs. Hartley's Rose—so much better than that *Irish creature* who complained to madame that you took so much of her time waiting on *you*, and that you were so *difficult to please*. I suppose the principle *is* wrong, but I have an excellent girl to wait on me and dress me, and it is very nice. There are two hundred slaves on this place. It is Mrs. Hartley's own property, and they *seem* very happy and very fond of their mistress. But probably *you* would say it was all *fear*. Rue Leszinksky owns *five hundred*. Is it not a *terrible sin* for her to hold so many *human beings in bondage?* I would not be in her place for *the world!* A *slave-owner!* I am sure *you* did not know what a *wretched*, *sinful thing she is*. She came over to Belleview in a *coach* and *four* with *two outriders*. Mr. Harry Esmond and Miss Esmond, who are what the slaves call 'quality,' were staying here with Mrs. Hartley. Mr. Harry Esmond met *us* on the cars. We got off at the same station, and Mrs. Hartley asked him to bring his sister, as we were alone at Belleview. You know I am *not vain*, but it was easy to see

that Mr. Harry Esmond was *not displeased* with the invitation. They *had an engagement* at 'The Cedars,' the *Leszinkskys' place*, and *broke it* to come to *us*. As I told you, Rue Leszinksky came to invite *us* to 'The Cedars.' And *then* the Esmonds went. I would not have gone to her house, but I *did* want to see how they *lived*. How shocked you would be! Why, the place is fairly *covered* with slaves. And just *think* what *airs* she gives herself! Some of the people who were visiting there called her *the* PRINCESS! Oh! I know what you will say when I tell you they are *secessionists!* I am so glad you think the slaves will soon be freed! And if they *do* have to kill their owners, who *can* blame them? I am sure *you* are *just right* in your feeling about *slavery*, and that poor, *dear*, *good* John Brown *was* a martyr. It would make any one *abhor slavery* to see that *stuck-up thing* on her plantation. And, with all her *haughty ways*, she is on *perfectly familiar* terms with these *common negroes*. No wonder she wanted *me* to listen to the insane raving of that wretched, crazy colored woman; she would be glad if it was all true. Why, she *actually calls a mulatto Mammy Sara!* 'The Cedars' is a larger house than

Belleview, but it is *horribly* furnished—old *trumpery stuff* a hundred years old, and that foolish girl seemed *proud of it.* I heard her tell Colonel Roane that some of the shackling, black old tables, and *secretaires*, and queer odds and ends were brought over by the *first Cartaret* that came from *England.* Rich as *they are*, to keep *such trash!* How mean! The dining-room is rather better. Mrs. Carisbrooke says it is a *perfect picture* of an old baronial hall. But the furniture is old *black oak*, with the most *horrid* carvings of *bears* and *things*—enough to give one frightful dreams to go in it when the big *light-wood knots* are blazing in the hearth and the *horrid things all seem alive.* Just think of burning *light-wood* in July evenings *because it happened to rain!* And Rue said she was '*glad of the excuse* to do *away with candles* when the *woods were full of pine-knots.*' *Princess, indeed!* A miser I should say.

"They *have* very pretty horses, and *Colonel Roane* gave me a lesson every morning and evening of the three days we were there. Colonel Roane is a *member of Congress.* He was *very nice* to me. And so was *Mr. Harry Esmond.* I ride *now* at Belleview with the *Esmonds* and sometimes Mrs. Hartley.

"How did you keep the Fourth of July? We had a *perfectly splendid* time at 'The Cedars.' I sang the 'Star-Spangled Banner' *most effectively*. I am glad *now* that madame always *insisted* on my practising for those *horrid concerts*. I know I *do* sing well. Signor Solfeggio always said I caught the *exact expression* as *he gave it me*. And the poor man *did* take great pains. What a *stupid* he was to let madame catch him on his knees *that day!* As I assured *you* at the time, *I* was not *at all* to blame. Of *course* I was *polite* to him. But I always tried not to *seem to understand* his nonsense; for I knew he gave me more *time* and made my lessons *easy* by the *pains he took*. And I had *so* much rather sing with a *master* than to practise *alone*. There was something to sing *for* when he went *mad* over my voice, as he used to do, poor *fool!* I never *had* a greater success than on the Fourth. I did not miss a point of acting or an expression Solfeggio had taught me. I think he would have given his *eyes* to have heard me. Music is the only thing I ever *have* cared to learn. I am sure if Captain Hartley had not arranged for *you* to room with me and help me in my studies I would never have got through with my classes. How

good you have been to get those *horrid 'ologies* in my poor *head*, and, best of all, to teach me to read *poetry* and put some *expression* in it. *That* is what poor Solfeggio did with my singing. I wonder if madame *would* let him come again and give me lessons if *you* would stay in the room? *Will you try to persuade her?* She knows Captain Hartley trusts *you*, and that he has arranged for you to go to *Europe* with me when I have finished in *Philadelphia*. Now, *dear* Miss Pyle, *won't you* get old Solfeggio back? *Do!* That's a *dear*, *lovely*, *sweet* Mentor. You know you call yourself my Mentor. Please, my *darling* Mentor, I want to sing as well as Lind or Sontag; and the signor said I *could* in time.

"We go to Washington to-morrow. I will *beg to stop* and see you a day in Philadelphia as we go through.

"Your own *loving*, *devoted*

"MAI HILTON."

(*White Sulphur Springs*, *August* 17, 1860. *Roane to Horry.*)

"MY DEAR HORRY: I perfectly agree with your statement—let me quote it: 'The union of the States was in no sense a constitutional revo-

lution or a proclamation of a new civil polity; it was, in fact, a mere *Bund* for the general convenience of the States and had no mission apart from them. The value of the federal Constitution was simply in the adjustment of the relations of the States, by which they became a harmonious whole in their foreign polity. The practical idea of the federal Union, which left to the States the exclusive guardianship of their domestic affairs, was a perfect recognition of the States as creators of the federal government, which was only the creature to whom certain powers were delegated for the convenience of international and inter-State relations.'

"I repeat, while believing this, I believe that our present national difficulty has in reality but small foundation in the much-argued question of State-rights. It is something more serious —something which is already past all chance of peaceful adjudication.

"In truth, sectional animosity has already divided the country into two distinct nations, and slavery furnishes a convenient cause of rupture. It is slavery which is the prominent distinction between the North and the South, therefore it has been urged as a subject of controversy. As the

occasion of discord it has become so conspicuous and feeling is so violent that careless thinkers mistake the occasion for the cause. It has the great advantage of being a specious plea for the North with the outside world; and it will probably win to that section the sympathy of lovers of freedom, though in reality the slavery agitation is not the offspring of philanthropy but of jealousy.

"Nothing has ever been more falsely attacked nor more unscrupulously misrepresented than the system of servitude in the South. It is the mildest system of obligatory labor the world has ever known. To the African it is not slavery in the sense of debasement. It has elevated the negro. It has lifted him from barbarism into the only civilization for which he is fitted—a subordinate place, it is true, but a place where he is protected in life and limb and where certain personal rights are recognized, and which gives him a safety and security unknown to the negro race in Africa.

"So much for slavery as an actual fact. As a pretext in our national division it is an admirable cause of quarrel. Yet slavery is but the excuse. The true difference is in the personal qualities of

the different stock from which the two sections have sprung.

"The quarrel of the North and the South is but a new phase of the old fight between the Puritan and the Cavalier—a dangerous revival of ancestral feuds which originated in political and religious difference.

"African slave-traders, who were assuredly not Southerners, made a feudal system possible in the plantations and colonies of the South in the eighteenth century. That system was founded and perpetuated, and is now sustained, by a landed gentry who in a great measure control the nation.

"The South has been the dominant power since the Revolution, but it has not been an aggressive power It has, on the contrary, threatened nothing to the North. It has enriched the North with its products. It has ruled the country for sixty years and there is no stain upon its honor. But all this has provoked the jealousy of the thrifty tradespeople, who are busy with their gains during the week and intolerant bigots in their Sunday conventicles. Unfit for legislators, they are envious foes of Southern statesmanship. Their innate conviction of inferiority

adds to their hatred. Should they once get into power the Saturnalia of fraud and corruption will begin, and will end only with that last terrible protest against excess—an absolute ruler. The conservatism of the South—a conservatism due to its great landed interests—has been the guardian of the republic.

"Your suggestive letter provoked all this, so that letter must be my excuse.

"To drop argument for results—and in fact all argument is now too late—I have lost all hope in the elections. The vague platitudes of the Bell and Everett platform are capturing the timid remnant of the Whigs, and also some fearful souls out of, or in, the Democratic ranks. But this could have done no harm had not our Solomons cut the Democracy in twain.

"Mr. Lincoln will come in and we needs must go. His inauguration will be the declaration, on the part of the North, of a geographical severance of ties.

"The clause in the Chicago platform on the Dred Scott decision is the handwriting upon the wall. Judicial authority is to be squelched and we are left to take 'Hobson's choice.' It is to be submission to abolitionism or nothing.

"For me I prefer—nothing; so I have commenced my preparations for the future. I shall sell my property in the North, and I have written to my overseer to put grain this fall in every acre of arable land on my plantation. Next year there will be fighting men to feed.

"I do not share the general delusion of my people; I know the North will fight. Those cursed Puritans fought well with Cromwell; and here—with such a heavenly pious pretext—they will put their persons in peril for their pocket's sake.

"Moreover, the war will be no child's play, nor will it end speedily unless we carry the war into Africa. And that I am afraid we will not do. The very State-rights doctrine that honest men like you so sturdily believe in will forbid that.

"The fight will be here in Virginia.

"I had a long talk to-day with Colonel Robert Lee, a man who, I fancy, will be our future leader—a greater than Washington, because he is Washington without the faults of the irascible '*Pater*.'

"Lee and Leszinksky are old friends. They are much together here, and are much alike in

character. They have a favorite seat under the rustling leaves of a purple ash; and when I can get away from the noisy declamation of our battle-hungry politicians I find my way to the shade that shelters the two soldiers. Listening to the sad reflections and grave apprehensions of these patriotic and peace-wishing warriors, I shut my eyes and dream that the summer wind is blowing from the Ionian Isles, while two of Plutarch's worthies are talking of a threatening oracle from Delphos and preparing for a sacrifice which may appease the wrath of the gods.

"The noisy politicians will only talk. The burden and heat of the day that is coming will fall most heavily on such men as Lee and Leszinksky.

"Carson is still here, and his days are full of softer cares. I am glad to tell you that Mrs. Carisbrooke has fully taken him into favor. His time of probation is shortened, and I hear from Miss Rue that we are all likely to meet in Cincinnati in the first week of the coming year for a wedding. It is well that Carson is busy love-making. Discussion is intrenching him more strongly in his opinions; from being the mildest he is growing to be the most intense of Union-

ists. He has had a few word-passages, which I feared might lead to a passage-at-arms, with one or two of our hot-blooded, unreasoning Hotspurs, who are so near-sighted and color-blind that they see only the side of the shield that is turned their way, and refuse belief to any other.

"Miss Molly is fully occupied smoothing the ruffled plumes of her gallant knight. But she does keep him in order. What a perfect wife she will make!

"Once in a while my teeth are set on edge with envy of some fellow's luck who may be more deserving, but who certainly is no more appreciative of the (half) divine sex than I.

"'The Princess' walks in maiden meditation, fancy free. Her adoration for her father has had one excellent effect. Her standard is a good one, and she is not in danger from any of these coxcombs who flutter about her fortune. I often wonder what fate is reserving for her. She, too, is of the Plutarchian type. In one thing she is all wrong—she is spoiling that dainty little half-sister with over-much devotion. One counts sacrifice nothing, and the other will, I fear, as she grows older take it as nothing.

"If you have time and inclination, write me what further signs you may see in the times.

"I will be here until the last of September, and then we break our party to meet again at the Carisbrooke wedding. In November I will be in Arkansas. Letters addressed to Little Rock will always follow and find me. All here regret that you would leave us when we left 'The Cedars.' You should have come with us."

(*Leszinksky to Carson from "The Cedars," January* 1, 1861.)

"Rue and I have both written to the Carisbrookes accepting their invitation for the 7th.

"I am particularly glad, my dear Carson, that we will be together several days before your marriage.

"Our long friendship has been so much to me that I look anxiously for a renewal of old ties of confidence and comradeship before the new ties are formed that will necessarily in some measure set aside the past. Not that I think the past will be forgotten or that our tried affection will grow cold—that would be impossible to either of us—but I foresee in the future a separation of hopes and interests that may keep us apart for

years, which will be a hard trial to a friendship like ours; not a trial in the sense of loss of regard, but a trial in the sense of sorrow because of our separation.

"The long-threatening storm is no longer at a distance. It is upon us. Danger is now a live thing with which we have to grapple.

"When the telegraph announced the election of Mr. Lincoln I knew the danger—which a brave man may fear because it menaces his home and his country—was near. The call of the Legislature of South Carolina for a convention, the meeting of that convention in Columbia on the 17th of last month, the adjournment to Charleston, and the passage on the 20th of the ordinance of secession were rapid steps on the onward march.

"Major Anderson's evacuation of Fort Moultrie, after spiking the guns and burning the gun-carriages, together with the removal to and the occupation of Fort Sumter, is a virtual assumption of hostility on the part of the federal government. An armed threat to a sovereign State is of itself, as I understand the federal Union, the inauguration of civil war, which is the most frightful of national calamities. And, as if to

make a way out of difficulty impossible, the North receives the intelligence of the momentous change in the sentiment of our people with sneers and derision, and of the warlike attitude of the government with acclaim and congratulation. Yet the congratulations prove how hypocritical are the sneers.

"Northern newspapers scoff at South Carolina 'chivalry.' The pictorial papers are filled with slanderous and derisive caricatures. The South is called 'a spoilt child.' A really great preacher, in a partisan and un-Christlike spirit, exclaims, 'Let the prodigal go!'

"'Mr. Greeley, who is certainly an authoritative mouthpiece of his party, says in the *Tribune*, that 'if the cotton States are satisfied they can do better out of the Union than in it we insist on letting them go in peace. The right to secede exists, and we do not see how one party can have a right to do what another party has a right to prevent. We hope never to live in a republic whereof one section is pinned to the residue by bayonets. If ever seven or eight States send agents to Washington to say, "We want to go out of the Union," we shall feel constrained by our devotion to human liberty to

say, "Let them go!" And we do not see how we could take the other side without coming in direct conflict with the rights of man.'

"Thus South Carolina is invited and sneered into secession at the very moment that an armed force is set threateningly in the harbor of her chief city.

"It seems that the North is anxious to precipitate disunion. At least it is taking great pains to provide South Carolina with cause and reason for secession. The Abolition papers are evidently fearful that result will not be attained, and they honestly proclaim their fears and their purposes. But the self-called Unionists disclaim an intended interference with slavery at the moment they adopt a bold move toward Federal centralization, supported by an armed force which threatens to subvert the rights of a State.

"The sorrowful attitude of the people of Virginia, who deplore the rending asunder of the Union, is also a matter of amusement and derision to the North. In one breath we are described as 'cowardly pacificators caring only for federal patronage and federal offices,' and in the next we are called 'braggarts and bullies,' who

'talk valiantly for the South, but who will desert it in the moment of need.'

"I cannot believe that all Northern writers are so utterly ignorant of the temper and history of our people; consequently I must believe they are working understandingly to bring about a result they desire.

"Yet, despite the misrepresentation and vilification, Virginia will not secede as long as there is the slightest and most feeble hope of reconciliation, or even of adjustment looking to peaceable separation. When hope is gone she will cast her fortune with the advocates of the rights of the States; and the most peace-loving and Union-loving of her children will fight more fearlessly in her cause because of her spirit of justice and moderation. She will have done her best for peace and unity before taking up arms, and she will be a rampart of defence to the South in the desperate struggle which will ensue.

"It is certain that Virginia will be the battle-ground. Her central position, her nearness to the Capital, will force it as a military necessity.

"You know what will then be my duty and what is my resolve. I had given up the profession of arms. If we ever can judge ourselves

fairly—if I know myself—my only ambition as a soldier was to do my duty and, wherever it was in my power, to spare and to save life. If I had felt that I was growing eager for success for selfish reason—avaricious of glory—I should have known that it was my duty, and I would have left the army at once. For we should not only pray not to be led, but we should instantly get out of the way of temptation.

"But I felt the army was a good school of discipline for me, and I was of use there to my fellow-soldiers. I resigned only from conviction of the necessity I was under to devote the remnant of my life to a higher duty. My children, both motherless daughters, needed me and needed a home.

"I shall never again draw sword from scabbard, except in defence of Virginia.

"The first duty of every American citizen is to his State.

"It is to the federal Union only when that represents his State.

"I have the common debt of all patriots to pay, and I have a more particular obligation. I was one of Virginia's pupils in the military school which she, in common with all the States,

established and supported. As a representative of her bounty I had the training, the education which prepares a soldier for the profession of arms. In addition to the common debt of patriotism I owe a personal debt. Virginia gave me place in the federal Union which her sons and her treasure had so largely contributed to create, and also the profession of arms in the Military Academy which her tribute, in revenue paid to the federal government, assisted to support.

"But, my dear Carson, you owe the same debt to Illinois. The heaviness of a great sorrow comes over me when I think of the parting of comrades who have been to each other the truest and most devoted of brothers.

"Your goddaughter has never asked me but one question about the chances of the future, although I know she is keenly alive to the change that has come and the change that is coming. Her question, only yesterday, was: 'Papa, will the old regiment go with the North? Will all of them be against us?' I do not know which of us was sorest at heart when I said, 'Yes.'

"I write this that it may not be necessary to

tell it in words when we meet. We will hold to our friendship, Carson, and be silent as to the inevitable. I know you will go with Illinois, and I know Illinois will go with the North. Mr. Douglas's influence will be as potent to hold, and will be as potently used to hold, the State in the Union as Mr. Lincoln's would be.

"The Democratic alliance with the South has been only an alliance of parties. It will now side with its section and its interests in its section.

"But come what may, old comrade, we will love one another. I trust you will keep to our old compact and be the guardian of my daughters. My will is made, and all arranged so that the date may be on record and nothing may be urged as to our antagonistic position at the time when it may come into effect.

"Rue's faults are generous faults, and she will be amenable to your rule through love to me as well as to you. But my great fear for her is that she may sacrifice her own life and happiness in some hot-tempered outburst of sympathetic defence of another, or in some passionate tempest of enthusiasm or gratitude. I am glad I owe no debt of friendship or favor to any one I could not trust my darling to love.

"Steenie is so sweet and gentle and attractive that I fear we are spoiling her. Rue is devoted to her, and we know what Rue's devotion means.

"I beg of you, Carson, do not let Margaret's child sacrifice herself even for her sister. I tell you frankly that is the danger I most fear.

"I have sometimes hoped Rue and Roane would care for each other. That is rather badly put, for they do care for each other; but their mutual regard is too openly and too frankly expressed to promise the fulfilment of my hope—which is a mere thought with me, but one you will understand. With love to the Carisbrookes from us all—and as that includes you, why you and Miss Molly must take the largest share—

"Always your comrade and brother,

"STANISLAUS LESZINKSKY."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"The bridegroom may forget his bride
Was made his wedded wife yestreen;
The monarch may forget the crown
That on his head an hour has been;
The mother may forget the child
That smiles sae sweetly on her knee;
But I'll remember thee, Glencairn,
And a' that thou has done for me."

ON the 4th of January the Leszinkskys arrived in Washington on their way to Cincinnati. Roane was to accompany them, and one day's stay in Washington had been arranged for his convenience. But he met them at Willard's with two excellent reasons for postponing his departure until the 10th; he would then arrive in Cincinnati one day before the wedding. *Excuse No.* 1: A delegation had arrived during the holidays from Arkansas, and were in daily conference with their senators and representatives as to the action of Arkansas in the secession movement. *Excuse No.* 2 was more personal. Captain Hartley, whose political position brought him into rather close relation with

Roane in committee-rooms and caucus meetings, had asked Roane to escort Mrs. Hartley and Miss Hilton to Cincinnati. They could not leave until the 10th. Mrs. Hartley had to preside at a grand political dinner and reception, where the delicate threads of political webs were to be skilfully set to catch the timid. Every house in Washington that winter was a focal point for some large or little intrigue, and Hartley's was the centre around which revolved the Northern sympathizers with secession.

Kate was a Virginian of the Virginians, which expressed at that time the utmost intensity of Unionism yet left in the State-rights school. In good truth, every Virginian then in Washington from the old Dominion (and they were there in shoals: merchants, professional men, planters, and idlers—I give the ascending grade of rank) walked Pennsylvania Avenue with the confident mien of one who, knowing he is born to greatness, is waiting to have it thrust upon him.

There was a plethora of embryo Washingtons, Jeffersons, Patrick Henrys, and Randolphs in the Capitol City equally ready to be "Fathers of the Country"; authors of new resolutions framing "the mode and measure of redress";

orators proudly threatening, "If this be treason make the most of it"; duelists coolly selecting a location for the inevitable bullet; or debaters stabbing an antagonist with the point of a stinging sarcasm. That they were not already winged and fully feathered was the misfortune of the country. But their "sheathèd thoughts" were unheard, and after weeks of patient waiting and unremunerative effort they disappeared from lobbies and avenues, and sank into silence with the "mute, inglorious Miltons and Hampdens" of their respective counties.

Poor fellows! The embryos missed greatness, but they died heroes, dropping one by one upon those bloody battle-fields of Virginia. Recognized too late! Why did they not cry, as they filed past that unfinished monument to the first and greatest of American rebels, *Morituri te salutamus!*

. . . . . .

Dr. Carisbrooke and Carson were waiting on the platform of the Hamilton and Dayton Railroad station for the coming of the eight o'clock train, now some minutes overdue. There was the hoarse scream of an engine at Brighton, followed by the rumbling thunder of heavy wheels

on an iron track, and with short, angry puffs and a red glare in its cyclopean eye the belated locomotive rolled heavily into the station at Cincinnati.

It was a clear, cold, frosty evening. The street-lamps flickered in little, waving tongues of flame, which sent their quivering red rays against the window-panes of the station and into the shadowy angles of the houses on the opposite side of the way.

In the distance stretched lengths and cross-lengths of lights which traversed the city and climbed the encircling hills.

Overhead the multitudinous stars shone through the soft radiance of the mystic twilight which lingers over cities when skies are stormless, from the setting until the rising of the sun; while below the curving river reflected the glittering chain, the tongues of flame and the radiant stars.

Doctor Carisbrooke took charge of Rue and Steenie, Mammy Sara and Oscar were packed in a hackney coach with the numerous packages of the travellers, while Carson and Leszinksky drove on rapidly in the light buggy with the fast trotter which Carson had driven over from the

garrison at Newport, where he was now stationed.

There had been a silent but more than usually cordial greeting between the two friends. The silence was unbroken, except by some casual question and reply as to change in the route and the streets, until they commenced the ascent of Vine Street hill.

Carson checked the rapid gait of his horse as he said: "I had not time to answer your letter, Stan, and, although you do not seem to think so, words are better and easier of understanding when we are face to face. I perfectly comprehend your position and your feeling. In your place I should be governed by the decision of Virginia. I hope to God Virginia will do nothing that will separate us! I don't care a damn for the cotton States, and I would be glad if they were out. If New England would go too, as her States have threatened to do from time to time, it would be a blessed riddance to the West and to the Middle States. But I am in the army, and I certainly will not resign just as those Carolina game-cocks begin to crow. If I was in Anderson's place I would send over a few shells and make it hot for them."

"I do not think you would, Carson. You would know, as Anderson does, that the State is a powder-magazine. A shell thrown with hostile intent into Charleston would blow up the Union."

"Have you any hope of its existence?"

"Not much. But in a good cause the faintest hope is worth cherishing. Unfortunately, men's passions are so inflamed they will not listen to reason. I am very glad Anderson is in the place of danger. He is an excellent soldier, and as a man he is moderate, modest, and just. If any federal officer can maintain peaceful relations with Charleston he will. I am only fearful of the orders he may receive from Washington. I regretted his change from Moultrie to Fort Sumter; but then I cannot judge for him—no one could who was not in his position. Fortunately, he is popular with the Charleston people, and they will not forget that Mrs. Anderson is a Southerner. Family relationships are exceedingly influential in a crisis like this. If you were going to Sumter to spend your honeymoon I would feel confident that you would be a very gallant and courteous enemy to the Charlestonians. Miss Molly would capture them as a charming woman and as a Carisbrooke."

"Doctor Carisbrooke is a Unionist."

"Yes, I grant he is in principle. But he belongs to one of the old Virginian families. I think he will find that he loves Virginia dearly when war has desolated her green fields and quiet homes. From Mrs. Carisbrooke's letters I infer, although she does not absolutely admit it in words, that her feeling for Virginia is likely to outweigh her attachment to the federal idea."

"Do you think it only an idea, Stan?"

"An idea is a great thing; sometimes it is a great truth. Ideas make and undo treaties, states, and peoples. Because of ideas came the truism that the poet, 'the ballad-maker, is greater than the law-maker.' One deals with ideas, the other with facts. And because facts are stubborn things they excite and beget stubbornness. Ideas capture through their suavity. Feeling may conquer ideas; facts rarely do. I think feeling is conquering Mrs. Carisbrooke."

"The cursed ill-temper and spite of her Northern neighbors is doing it. She was an excellent Unionist last summer in Virginia."

Leszinksky laughed as he answered: "For your sake, Carson, I will try my best to persuade her to make us a winter visit. I assure

you she will hear very few kind things said of the North. Virginian women are not Griseldas. The patient quality in their patriotism is soon exhausted. Personal bitterness is intense now, and it is growing fierce and aggressive. There is the pity of it! Friendship, affections, even family relationships, will hardly survive the wrench that is coming."

He held out his hand to Carson, who caught it in a mighty grasp—the clasp one might take if two shipwrecked friends were going down together in a stormy sea. They looked at each other, but somehow there was a misty quality in the starlight. The faces seemed already far apart. With a sigh that was almost a sob Carson said:

"We will never let go our friendship, old comrade?"

"Never. We are bound by a past we can neither of us forget. And then—there is Margaret; she loved you as a brother, and she is yet the star of my life. The sweetness of heaven, Carson, is reunion. We will find there our broken affections and friendships. If we are ever face to face in a battle-field—not as foes (we could never be foes), but each in the service of his

country—though 'you slay me yet will I love you.'"

The stars shone out clear and bright. The mist had gathered into tears.

An hour later they came into the drawing-room at Rosebank together. Carson had given his horse in charge to the servant who was waiting at the gate, and they had turned away from the house and walked in the dim light through the wood. Leszinksky had thought of the summer day and the beautiful woman when he sat down on the bank above the path where the robin was buried.

Sitting there, he gave Carson his last charge to and of his daughters; last directions for the care of the people whose progenitors had been for generations faithful servants of the Masons; last messages for his friends; and a request to Carson to care for Kate if she should have need of a protector. And Carson made every promise his comrade asked.

Then, standing in the shadows, they clasped each other in an embrace which was the seal of the past and the sign and the promise in the future.

When they entered the drawing-room Mrs.

Carisbrooke's quick exclamation of reproach was hushed when half uttered. She saw the reason for their delay in the faces of the friends.

Doctor Carisbrooke came from his study as supper was announced. Molly, Rue, and Steenie were in the supper-room when the elders entered from the drawing-room. As Leszinksky kissed Molly he placed in her hands two small packages.

"My gift and Steenie's, with our love to Cousin Molly."

Molly opened the packages. One was an exquisitely-painted miniature of Margaret, the other of Rue and Steenie.

Molly. "Thanks, Uncle Stan—thanks to you and Steenie; nothing could be more valued as a wedding-gift than we will value these."

Rue hurriedly left the room; returning before the examination of the miniatures was finished, she gave a small parcel to Carson, and to Molly an open case containing a superb set of pearls.

Molly. "O Rue! I have no words with which to thank you."

Rue. "Then, Molly, I will be glad if you do not try to find any. The pearls are a Cartaret gift of ceremony from 'the heiress of The Ce-

dars.' I think their selection is rather creditable to that disagreeable and much-worried personage; further than recognition of taste in the selection there is no need of thanks. But, Molly, do not take it to heart that Rucheil Leszinksky has given something of higher value to your sweetheart."

Carson opened the parcel, which contained another miniature. Molly leaning on his shoulder, they saw the face at the same moment and with one impulse turned to kiss Rue, Carson exclaiming:

"You have fulfilled the wish I made as I looked at the miniature of your mother. But how did you persuade 'King Stan' to this, Rue? He has always been obstinate in the matter of pictures—even mulish about so simple a thing as a daguerreotype."

Rue. "I did not persuade, nor did he consent. He knew nothing of it."

Leszinksky. "My picture? In what trap have I fallen?"

Rue. "The trap, papa, was the painting of the other miniatures. The artist caught the likeness as he could. I knew you thought I was rather importunate in begging you to come and keep our

'Humming-Bird' in order during those long sittings. Then you were there so often about mamma's picture; and, if you remember, there was always some reason for your going, and you always had the same seat given you. This is the result, and not the only one. There are two others; see, I am wearing one, and here, 'Humming-Bird,' here is yours."

Rue pointed to a brooch she wore—her father's head painted on ivory and set in pearls. She gave one like it to the beautiful child, who danced and sang her delight.

"Bring it here, 'Humming-Bird,'" called Leszinksky; then, as the child did not hear, he whistled a few soft notes. There was a rush of white drapery that rustled like wings, and Steenie was nestling in her father's arms. He, looking at the miniature, said:

"I do not know, Rue—in truth, I think one never does know one's own face—but I fancy the painter of this has won your patronage by flattering me."

Rue. "Is mamma's flattered, or Steenie's, or mine?"

Leszinksky. "No, I do not think they are."

Rue. "Neither do I think is this. In fact, I

quarrelled over it daily. I am afraid I bullied the poor little painter; I know I frightened him prodigiously. But the result was worth it. He said himself that yours is the best of the miniatures."

Leszinksky. "All of which proves the flattery. The poor fellow dared not paint me in my very habit as I live. He had the fear of you before his eyes. He was wise enough to find your weak point. Your vanity is not personal, my Rue."

The tenderness of Leszinksky's tone and glance brought his daughter to his side. Steenie had flown to Mrs. Carisbrooke, and all were busy with the miniatures. Stooping low, with her arms about her father's neck, Rue said:

"You are my especial vanity, papa. But yet it is personal, for you are my very own—the dearest treasure I have in all the world."

A tear dropped on the hand Rue raised to her lips. Looking into her eyes, her father saw shadowed in their depths the fear that was haunting her—fear for that which is dearest.

The doctor's voice grumbling a complaint was heard.

"Very fine, very pleasant—looking at pearls

and flattering Leszinksky. But it would be better for you all to eat your supper while it is warm. Hot biscuit and hot waffles have come and gone. The prairie chickens will be burnt, not broiled. Our Rosebank cook is a long-suffering and patient woman, but human nature finds a point where revolt to oppression is obligatory. Supper has been half an hour on the table, and travellers that ought to be hungry are yet unfed. Come here, Steenie. Your place is here beside me; we will eat our supper like sensible people."

The days the Leszinkskys spent at Rosebank that week were very quiet, happy days that lived always in the recollection of the guests and the hosts.

Carson's presence and Carson's happiness were the most salutary of tonics to Leszinksky.

Steenie, much to her own delight and his, was the doctor's constant companion. She would make quick rushes into his study, following him from the conservatory to the hot-houses, going with him to the stable with pockets filled with lumps of sugar for the horses, watching the harnessing, asking, with the soft, beseeching appeal of her beautiful dark eyes,

to go with him in his long morning drives. Whenever the weather was fit consent was always given. A basket would be quickly filled with hastily-improvised bouquets, which were left with suffering patients of the doctor's as visible reminders of the child who brought into those dull, wintry days of pain the loveliness and freshness of the spring-time.

Molly and Rue were equally inseparable, and in the long hours of their companionship their early attachment grew into a strong and noble friendship—a friendship rarely possible to women, for the lives of women are so absorbed by the affection they give in such measureless quantity that there is scarcely place for friendship. They are very ready to pledge themselves—believing, mayhap, at the time the pledge is made, in its eternal duration—to a sentiment they call friendship, which is simply another phase of the affection they lavish on their last caprice.

But between these two maidens the reality was possible, because the conditions of that truest, noblest, and most unselfish of sentiments were present. Their temperaments and way of thought were as widely different as had been their training and manner of life. But these dif-

ferences were harmonized through strong points of likeness. They were equally tenacious in liking and stubborn in surrender of such liking. Molly's was the more amiable but not the sweeter character of the two; yet Molly would seem the sweeter because of her steadfast calmness.

Both were truthful and honest beyond the ordinary measure of woman. Neither was given to that small lying, that petty duplicity, with which the sex too often think it needful to hide the rough edges of life. Yet here again results were different because their temperaments were different.

Molly's truthfulness was an adornment because it was never discourteous. Rue's kept her too constantly in the objective case. Her truthfulness was disputative, and thus it was frequently offensive. But after admitting that the balance turns again in Rue's favor. Molly never, or rarely, offended; consequently she was never humbled through confession of offence. Nor had she learned from the teaching of humiliation to make quick and cordial concession to others. All this Rue had learned through the misadventures into which she had strayed or fallen; and the impulsiveness that prompted

instant reparation won her from generous natures the liking which is all the stronger because it is conquered.

The stability of this new friendship, founded as I have shown, was made sure by mutual respect and esteem. It widened Molly's ways of thought and gave breadth to her judgment. She learned to be tolerant—the lesson which is so difficult to the well-trained and carefully-nurtured ornaments of society. To Rue this friendship was a still greater good—it had a decided and beneficial effect in the qualities she acquired from her friend.

I have made but a poor exhibit of Rucheil Leszinksky if I have not made the reader see and understand the strength and simplicity of her character. But I insist that just such characters are most susceptible to impression. They always catch some measure of the quality of those they love. Carson understood this truth so well that in her babyhood he had said of Rue: "She is not one who can touch pitch and not be defiled. I thank God, when she sees a scoundrel she scorns him."

Through her susceptibility Rue caught a small modicum of Molly's serene and calmly impartial

sense of right. One naturally speculates upon what deeper change might have been wrought in Rue if this companionship had lasted. Unhappily the companionship was broken by the onward march of the national calamity, which was approaching day by day with the swift relentlessness of Fate.

Mrs. Hartley, Miss Hilton, and their attendant cavaliers arrived the day before the wedding. Besides Roane, Bradnor was on duty; he had been invited at Mrs. Hartley's request.

Kate and the Carisbrookes were sincerely glad to meet again. Mai Hilton was, as Mrs. Carisbrooke thought, too effusive; which effusiveness Rue rather haughtily repelled, until Molly begged her consideration for the girl who had "never known either home or family ties."

Then our Princess softened—over-much, in fact, for her relinquishment of a prejudice suggested mistrust of that intuition which is woman's divinely-given safeguard, and more especially the safeguard of an intense and trustful nature.

While in this softened and contrite frame, that had already surrendered her to repentance, Rue

was introduced to "Mr. Bradnor" and recognized the "swamped lieutenant." Her unaccustomed humor, and her loving memory of the "squad" and the life that had been so dear to her, swept away all recollection of offence, except remembrance of herself as an offender.

A swift, amused glance from Carson brought a deep rose-tint into her usually pale cheeks. Both had thought of "the duel." Rue's womanliness was proved by her blushing face, and still more by her prettily apologetic greeting of her old enemy. Even her father, who was constantly expecting from her the new development of some hitherto unknown perfection, was surprised at her frank confession of the wrong she had done, joined to expression of regret for the wrong.

But her father's surprise was a mildly approbative wonder, very different from Carson's astonishment. For Carson, who had watched all the moods of her stormy childhood, would have been less exasperated, less dismayed, at renewal of her challenge than at this sweet apology. From that moment the "swamped lieutenant" was a *bête noire* to the fiery dragoon.

Then, too, Bradnor's manner of accepting ex-

cuse and apology as things of small moment, and the gracious effort he made to reconcile his old antagonist—to herself—did not tend to sweeten Carson's temper. Internally he even swore at Leszinksky for his courteous show of interest in his daughter's interlocutor. With an unconcealed expression of disgusted disapproval he was about to leave in search of his consoler when he suddenly recollected a forgotten appointment—a reason for interrupting Rue's colloquy. There was a very apparent spice of malice in his eagerness of speech:

"Excuse me, Rue. But some one is waiting in Dr. Carisbrooke's study to see you—some one I think you will be glad to see. A detachment from the old regiment arrived at Newport to-day."

At the news of "some one waiting" Rue turned to make her excuses to Bradnor; but the words, "a detachment from the old regiment," swept away all other thought. She was in the hallway when she met Oscar.

"Who is in the study to see me, Oscar?"

"Nobody now, Miss Rue. Marse Bob Stearns was thar a long time waitin', but he thought at las' may be you couldn't come. I think he was

kinder hurt, Miss Rue. He's jes' started back to the garrison with Major Carson's horse. The major ain't goin' thar to-night."

"How long has he been gone?"

"I'se jes' been helpin' him with his hosses at the stable; he ain't more 'an got out the gate."

"Go after him! Run, Oscar! Run! Bring him back to me!" They had both reached the door while she was speaking. She pulled it shut behind her. Oscar was already at the gate, she calling after him, "Faster! O Oscar, faster!"

Through the fading twilight she could see the strong, active runner fairly flying down the road toward the city. A light snow was falling, which the wind caught and whirled in feathery columns. She stood for a moment or two on the steps, the fleecy folds of her white evening dress seeming a part of the drifting snow. Unable to restrain her impatience, she ran down to the gate and then through it into the road to watch Oscar. Yes, he had overtaken the rider, who was forced to go slowly with the spirited horse he was leading.

Oscar had mounted the led horse, and they were coming back in a gallop. They saw her waiting in the road. A soldier muffled in a dra-

goon's cloak shouted: "Capin Rue! O Capin Rue! out here in this snow!" And he sprang to the ground beside her. Through sobs and laughter, laughter and sobs, she was crying:

"O Bob! O Bob! I did not know you were here. I did not know you were waiting. Forgive me, Bob. O Bob! I am so glad, so glad."

Without a word he caught her in his arms and lifted her to the saddle, wrapping her in the cape he took from his shoulders. Then, walking beside her, he led the horse to the little sheltered porch upon which Dr. Carisbrooke's study door opened. Throwing Oscar the reins, he lifted her down and carried her in. As he placed her in an easy-chair by the fire he said:

"You oughtn't to a-done it, Capin Rue. No, Capin Rue, you oughtn't to a-done it. I didn't think I ever would a-been sorry to see you, capin, but I'd a-ruther had nine-and-thirty on my bar' back than to a-seen you out thar in this weather. An' it's my fault, capin. If you war to die 'twould be my fault. I war a fool—a cussed, onery fool; beg your pardon, capin, but I can't help a-sayin' it. That's jes what I war. I mought a-knowed it war a mistake. I ought to a-knowed you better, and you a Leszinksky."

She was quieted now, but she was very pale, and she breathed in little, gasping sighs, each one of which pierced Bob like a knife He knelt down beside her, and, warming the rug, wrapped it about her feet, looking up at her with a wistful, watchful look of sympathy. She threw back the cape and extended her hands.

"I am so glad to see you, Bob—so glad! I don't think I have ever quite left the regiment, Bob. Half of my heart has always been with you all out there on the plains. How could you think I would forget—that I did not care? Did you think I had forgotten how you followed me into the Comanche country? Did you think I could forget Pike? or Bouie's Hill and those we lost there? Did you think I had forgotten my chief, or how you fought to save him? My chief! my chief!—could I forget my chief?"

She was sobbing bitterly and Bob was blubbering like a whipped school-boy. There was a scraping of feet at the outer door, and then some one knocked. Mastering her sobs, Rue rose from her chair as she motioned to Bob to open the door. It was Oscar. The two men stood back in the shadow waiting. Rue was standing by the open fire, putting first one and then the

other little slippered foot on the fender to dry. Carson came in, and she asked :

"Cannot Bob put up the horses and stay here to-night? I wish to see him in the morning."

"Certainly, if you wish it, Rue."

"Good-night, Bob. Oscar will see that you are comfortable for the night." She gave him her hand, which he kissed with the strange delight and awe with which he had kissed her baby fingers when he first touched them ; that was years ago at the time he was so nearly drowned saving her and her mother.

When the men were gone Rue bid Carson "good-night," saying she would go to her room.

Oscar sent Mammy Sara to her, and the child —in many ways she was yet but a child—was warmed and hushed to sleep upon the faithful breast that had been her shelter in her motherless babyhood.

Carson made her excuses to the Carisbrookes and told Leszinksky of her interview with Bob. Neither spoke the thought aloud, but that last scene in her life at Bouie's Hill was the picture that came out of the past.

The wind had died away after wrapping Rue in its fleecy gathering, and frozen drops from the

vaporous clouds had fallen steadily until day-break. Then the sun came out and every little particle lying in the sheeted fields reflected the broken rays, until the air was luminous and the world a-dazzle with the white radiance of the snow. In the morning Rue had a long, quiet talk with Bob before he went over to the garrison.

After Bob was gone she asked Mammy Sara where he had slept—she was thoughtful of the comfort of this dear friend. She was told that Mrs. Carisbrooke had given Oscar the key of the little cottage in the orchard. Rue remembered that Lucy had lived there, and she knew Lucy had never returned to Rosebank since she was in Philadelphia nearly two years before, the summer she nursed Mai Hilton.

Then she remembered her new resolve, and so Mai Hilton was surprised by generous and delicate kindness, which kindness, with her usual penetration, Miss Hilton translated into jealousy.

One bit of news in that day's letter to Rachel Pyle was: "Rue Leszinksky is *desperately* in love with *Mr. Bradnor* and nearly *wild* through her jealousy of *me*. She has found that her *pride* hurts no one but *herself*, and now she plays sweetness."

The wedding guests were assembling; the day was one of mild expectancy. There was feasting, and drinking, and music, and dancing, and smiles, and laughter. But Erinnys was ready to cut the threads of a nation's life. She must have let go some cobwebby spinning of lesser moment; how else can I explain the thrown-away tangle Bob and Oscar found in the cottage that had been so long tenantless?

Molly Carisbrooke was no longer Molly Carisbrooke. A reverend bishop—whose good life, now that he is dead, keeps his memory green in the hearts of the many that loved him—pronounced the nuptial benediction. Beautiful women and brave men assisted at the ceremony. But beauty withers in the long days of mourning, and the brave will fall in the storm of battle like leaves in the autumn woods.

O dread Erinnys! It is well that you dwell in those awful regions with the grim terror-breeding Shades, and that your spinning is unseen of mortals.

CHAPTER XXIX.

"This point is, to be sure, a very delicate one to treat; for in words, at least, the age has grown to be wonderfully moral. . . . But human nature, as far as I am able to learn, has not much changed since the time when Richardson wrote and Hogarth painted a century ago."

THE morning after the marriage the short distance of Carson's wedding-journey was accomplished in an hour's drive. He had been on leave of absence nearly all the previous summer. The changes in the disposition of the few regiments that were not actually needed in Utah and New Mexico, and the movement of troops in view of the threatening state of affairs in South Carolina, made it difficult for Carson to ask or obtain fresh leave. But Molly had already taken her place as helper. She decided that they would go from Rosebank to Carson's quarters in the garrison. She so strenuously insisted upon her preference for Newport that Carson delightedly yielded to her decision.

Mrs. Hartley, Miss Hilton, Roane, and Bradnor left the same morning for Washington.

The Leszinkskys, Carson's son, and Carson's

sister, Mrs. McCormack, were the only visitors left at Rosebank, and Mrs. McCormack was to meet her husband at the station for the evening train.

Dominie McCormack had left Rosebank immediately after an early breakfast. He had affairs of moment that needed his attention in the office of Friend Fisher.

It had cost the honest zealot the sacrifice of what he regarded as valuable time and a painful effort at outer adornment to come to the wedding of his wife's brother. Not that the dominie felt the slightest embarrassment over past difficulties. The time when, according to his judgment, though physically vanquished, he was morally victor in his combat with principalities and powers, had left him comforting, not mortifying, recollections. He had simply gone through the tribulations to which the just are called. He had suffered for conscience' sake, for which he had an indwelling sense of triumph and—that rarest and most perfect bliss to a bigot—the feeling that he had been a martyr to his beliefs.

He had rather a feeling of gratitude than resentment to those who had, however unintentionally, lifted him to eminence in the category

of witnesses who testify to truth through the shedding of their blood. Moreover, when you could get through the crusts that covered it, the dominie had a kindly disposition.

Thus the things which would have kept a resentful or sullen temper at slumberous heat brought forth the dominie's friendliness.

The invitation to Carson's wedding was the holding out of an olive-branch which seemed to him an amend, if not an apology, for the time when Carson had blazed out in fierce and profane words in a letter which threatened the dominie with personal chastisement—words of unholy and irreverent anger, that had made no more impression than would a passing blast of sounding trumpets and tinkling cymbals. For the dominie had never been self-convicted of wrong in the punishment inflicted upon his wife's nephew. He had himself been trained to a virtuous and orthodox manhood through the same argument; *à fortiori*, why should he not apply it to others?

As to Rue, the dominie felt there could be no doubt that she was the aggressor. Had she not answered words of wisdom and truth with the application of an instrument to the magisterial

cranium, that came near trepanning him without help of surgery or benefit of clergy?

When the olive-branch was handed the dominie he asked his wife, as he had often asked himself: "Why should the just chastisement of an obstinate boy and a warning shake given to an impertinent little minx"—he was not classically choice in his selection of words, but he did have a hearty liking for strong old English—"keep us from friendly relationship or from acceptance of this invitation?—though you must excuse me for saying, my dear, that I consider your brother an unreasonable and profane blasphemer."

After thus relieving his mind of its burden of condemnation the dominie was silently acquiescent to the note and burden of preparation. Punctually at the hour named the McCormacks arrived at Rosebank and the Carisbrookes made them welcome.

The dominie was amiable, I might even say conciliating, to his old young antagonists and their respective progenitors. At the dancing he blew his arched proboscis with a note of defiant displeasure, but he did wisely manage to hold his tongue from further utterance. Mentally he

disapproved of many things he saw, but he most cordially approved of the supper. His "'isms" had not interfered with his digestion or made him a dyspeptic, as 'isms of their class are wont to do. His twists were in his brain, not in his stomach. The last had a keen and sensitive delight in the things of the flesh; and, happily, his next neighbor at the table was a divine of his own persuasion, celebrated as a controversialist and distinguished as an epicure. Thus the conversation was much to the dominie's taste, and the interruptions to conversation equally agreeable to his palate. Fortunately for his hosts, the frame of mind begotten of this doubled pleasure kept the dominie in a radiantly agreeable mood until he was shown to his room.

Then, as the gods of discord would have it, Oscar was usher. To the Rev. Mr. McCormack a negro was always an interrogation-point, or rather the finger-post of destiny in the march of the universe. Mrs. McCormack had remained downstairs with the revellers, so Oscar's stay was prolonged with offer of service. As "the man and the brother" drew off the new boots, which had been the crumpled rose-leaves in the

evening of the epicurean reformer, he commenced questioning:

"Were you born a slave or a freeman?"

"Me, sah?"

"Yes; were you born free?"

"I belongs to Marse Stan, sah."

"What!!!"

Half frightened by the tone, Oscar added, in his most suave and apologetic manner:

"To Major Leszinksky, sah. I was lef' to him from the Masons, sah—the Masons of Mount Hope. Doctor Carisbrooke was kin to 'em. Marse Stan's mother was a Mason, and his grandfather, old Judge Mason, raised me, sah."

"You mean you are a slave?"

"Yes, sah; I belongs to Marse Stan."

"And he brought you to Ohio?"

"Oh! yes, sah. He hardly ever goes anywhar, sah, without Oscar—leastways when I can be spar'd from home."

There was a ring of pride and triumph in the last words. And Oscar looked at his interrogator as if he could say more but modesty forbade.

"You unfortunate and cruelly oppressed victim, you unhappy slave! your ruffianly tyrant

must and shall release his unlawful hold. You were made free the instant you touched this blessed soil, coming as you did with his knowledge and consent."

"I don't know nothin' 'bout none o' them folks, sah. I belong, sah, to Major Leszinksky."

"Do you mean to say you do not know what freedom is—that you are willing to remain a slave?"

"I know plenty of free niggers, sah; I've seen 'em mostly in the North, sah, but we has got a few in Virginia. But me? I was raised by old Judge Mason. I belong to that family, sah—one of the very best, sah, in the State."

"You do not understand me, my poor friend. I mean to tell you that the instant you came into Ohio with your master's knowledge and consent you were free. The law frees you. Do you not want to be free?"

"I ain't never studied 'bout that, sir. But if you means do I want to leave Marse Stan, sah, or my Miss Rue, or the family, sah—no, sah! I was raised with Marse Stan, sah. Why, this fam'ly wouldn't sell me, sah, for all the money anybody mought offer. No, sir; no money wouldn't buy me, sah."

"But you can leave them. I will put on my boots and go with you this night to Friend Fisher. He's an anti-slavery lawyer; you can be free to-morrow."

"I ain't got no 'casion, sah, to go to no Marse Friend Fisher. I wouldn't leave Marse Stan no more 'ner he'd sell me, sah."

"But do you prefer to be a slave? Have you no sense of manhood? Do you not want your freedom? And your wife and children—would you not have them free?"

"I ain't got no children, and my wife was—"

He stopped abruptly as the sore spot in his life was touched. Words would have been impotent, even if he could have told of his marriage with Lucy, and how and why he lost her. Speech was impossible; but the gleaming eyes and the pose of the tall, strong figure, with the clenched fists and the head thrown back until the swollen muscles were brought into full relief, expressed a grief so deep that it was speechless.*

* The story of Oscar, which is only indistinctly outlined here from the necessities of the drama, is fully told in "Baby Rue." The author would like, if it were possible, to write again the narrative of the life of the Leszinkskys on the plains, and of the noble devotion of the black man who, alone with Bob Stearns, followed his master's child, when she had been captured by the Pawnees, into the heart of the Indian country.

"Sold away from you? I knew it! Taken, possibly, for a concubine. A slave's wife is not his; she belongs to his master. Your master robbed you of your wife!"

"What!" The negro advanced threateningly and the dominie retreated rapidly toward the door. But Oscar stopped.

"You don't know Marse Stan, sah, so I won't take no 'count o' what you said. He would no more a-took my wife, sah, than he would take yourn—an' she's Marse Carson's sister, an' Marse Carson's like a brother to him, sah. But me? Why, my mammy nussed him when she nussed me. Why, he'd—yes, sah—*die* to keep me from bein' put upon and wronged. *Marse Stan hurt me? Marse Stan!* You don't know Marse Stan. An' you'se made a mistake, sah, 'bout me." And Oscar strode out of the room without waiting for dismissal.

The next morning after his early breakfast the dominie asked for Leszinksky. He told him frankly how he had questioned Oscar, and his determination to take advantage of his having brought Oscar into the State. He said he was not yet satisfied that the slave understood his rights, and that he intended to send Friend

Fisher up to see and question him, but that after Oscar's testimony to his master's kindness he thought it only right to be frank.

Leszinksky thanked him for the complimentary confidence, and pledged his word that Friend Fisher might talk as long as he liked with Oscar, or at least as long as Oscar would listen, adding that Oscar might decide the question of freedom for himself.

Coming into the library half an hour later, Mrs. Carisbrooke was astonished to find the dominie a pleased listener to Leszinksky, who was earnestly discussing with him the possibilities and future of the negro race. They differed widely in views and methods, but Leszinksky's courtesy was conquering the dominie's prejudice when Roane appeared, and Mrs. Carisbrooke managed to inveigle him into the discussion. I am not sure her malice was not more specially aimed at Roane than the dominie. But when the doctor and Carson came down Leszinksky was a silent listener and the wordy war was hot and bitter.

The dominie took leave, and in the afternoon Friend Fisher came and interrogated Oscar. Then he had a long interview with Oscar's mas-

ter, and left in a rather depressed and contemplative mood.

Rue spent the day shopping in the city with Mammy Sara and Stanislaus Carson. Steenie was out with the doctor. After luncheon and after Friend Fisher's visit Leszinksky was alone in the library, writing, when Mrs. Carisbrooke opened the door.

"You are busy?"

"Something that can wait. I will be very glad to put the writing aside and talk with you."

"Then I will come in, for I have something to say."

Leszinksky placed a low easy-chair on one side of the open fireplace and arranged a screen to shade the face of the lady, who, busied with some knitting-work, seemed to forget the "something to say," although the willing listener was seated opposite, waiting.

"What fascination there is in knitting! It always seems to charm women. Is it the weaving of meshes or the playing with steel that is the attraction? Or are you conscious that your beautiful hands are shown at their best in the flash of the long, slender needles and in the rosy glow of the firelight in that crimson wool?"

"The exhibition and the pleased vanity, of course."

"Which acceptance of motive your tone denies. But you know you have beautiful hands; and why should you not wish them to be seen?"

"Did that coxcomb Bradnor bite you before he left? I never knew you to talk folly before. Isn't it rather late for you to bloom out in such flower?" She was so evidently nettled that he laughed; then she laid aside her work with an affectation of great carefulness, at which he laughed afresh.

"Stan, I do not like to be rude to you, but silliness in you is so unexpected that it puts me out of temper. Moreover, I wished to consult you about something which is serious and which worries me."

His manner was instantly attentive and sympathetic:

"I am serious; and you know I am always at your service."

"I sent Oscar night before last to the cottage in the orchard with that soldier from the garrison. The servants' quarters as well as the house were crowded. There was no other place to give the man. Lucy had been away so long

that it seemed needless to keep it always unoccupied—though the furniture is Lucy's own, and I have always respected her right to her home. Carisbrooke had it repaired and put in order for Lucy. She seemed happier out there, and she had nothing in common with our servants. There are two rooms and a roughly-finished shed. Every time Lucy vanishes I find the front-door key left in my basket. She always takes with her the key out of the padlock which fastens the back door, or else hides it somewhere in the shed. When she returns from one of her long absences she always goes to the cottage before coming to the house; and, as you know, we never speak of her absence. She simply resumes her place in the household.

"I had given the key of the front door to Oscar. I did not think of his relationship to Lucy; I had forgotten it. An hour later I met him in the hall near the dining-room. I think he was going to your room. I knew you had gone to your room. I asked him if he had made a fire in the cottage, and if it was in order, or did he need anything? He hesitated, and I questioned him sharply, and then he told me that the house had been opened before they went out there. He

found a fire nearly burned out in the stove. I said, 'Lucy must have come back,' and he answered, 'Yes, madam, Lucy is here. She's somewhere in the house here now.' He seemed intensely eager and excited, which made me remember all of Lucy's story. So I asked:

"'Do you want a place for the soldier? If that is it you must make a pallet for him in the doctor's study. Where is he?' He told me the man was in the kitchen, and I bade him go with him to the outside door of the study. When I opened the study door Oscar started to go into the hall. I told him that Major Carson was with you, and again I asked what he wanted. Then he said he wanted to see Lucy. I told him I would see if she was in the house. I left them in the study, intending to speak to Carisbrooke, but Carisbrooke was with you.

"Now, no one has told me, but I know Mai Hilton is Lucy's child. I thought instantly Lucy was in Kate's room. Mai Hilton roomed with Kate.

"As I passed Molly's door I heard Kate talking with Molly. Rue was asleep, so I knew that Mai Hilton must be alone. But as I knocked at her door I heard voices. They did not hear me.

Before I could knock again the door was partly opened and Lucy stood on the threshold, looking back with a wild, scared expression into the room. I heard Mai Hilton say: 'Never come to me with that lie again. I detest, I abhor you! I would take my own life if I thought I was your child!' Lucy's hands were now clasped and extended to the girl in piteous entreaty. I never saw such an expression of suffering, agonized motherhood. I suppose I did wrong, but I could not help it; the feeling for Lucy, sympathy for her lonely life, recollection of her suffering, of her half-insanity, made me identify Mai with Hartley. One had robbed Lucy, the other denied her.

"I took Lucy's hand and led her up to Mai, saying: 'She is your mother. You were taken from her. She was robbed of her child and sold as a slave. She never deserted you or consented to give you away. Lucy will not ruin your position in the world by telling the story. For Lucy's sake I will not tell it to any but one; and that person is not one of my own family. Molly does not and shall not know. The world shall never know, but you must acknowledge your mother. You must think of her and not of

yourself. She has suffered cruelly for you and because of you. She is your mother!'

"Lucy had fallen on her knees at the girl's feet. The girl is a Hoyt. I had thought her all Hartley until that moment. But she is akin to her grandfather the gambler. She faced me without a tremor, saying: 'I know you have never liked me and that you are willing to humiliate me. But I do not think you would lie. What proof is there that this woman is my mother?' I told her the plain, unvarnished truth, saying: 'She belonged to the first Mrs. Leszinksky, who was, as you know, a Cartaret. Mrs. Leszinksky sold her to Major Hartley when you were born, that your father might free you both. Major Hartley is your father. Mrs. Cartaret gave you the name of her first husband.

"'Your mother refused to give you up, and your father sold her to a negro-trader. Major Leszinksky forced your father to redeem her and free her.' The girl looked me steadily in the eyes as the tale was told. Lucy was prone upon the floor with her arms about the girl's knees. Suddenly Mai stooped and lifted Lucy's head, and the two faces were close together. 'Yes,' she said, 'I believe you are my mother,

but I will not live to acknowledge it. If you prove this disgrace upon me you will drive me to my death.' Without a word Lucy got up on her feet. She kissed the girl's hands. I knew, and Mai knew, that her mother had given up all claim, that it was their last parting. Once more the girl spoke: 'I am sorry for you--for your sake I am sorry that I am your child—but I swear that the man who has caused you to suffer and caused me this torture shall pay dearly for it. I never wish to look upon your face again; but I am sorry for you.' Lucy silently came with me from the room. I went with her to the cottage and left her there with Kate's maid. We had met Rose in the hall, and I knew that Rose had recognized Lucy. Some one must stay with Lucy, and I thought it had better be Rose. It was well that Rose was there and that Oscar was watching the cottage—for Oscar did watch. Before morning Lucy had one of those frightful attacks. And she is now in such a condition that Carisbrooke thinks it will be necessary to send her to an asylum. I knew Rose would tell Kate, so I told her that night. She was with Lucy nearly all yesterday and part of last night. A nurse came from Longview yester-

day, and Oscar is almost constantly in the next room. He is often needed, for she is violent. Carisbrooke and I both thought it best to keep the story from you until after Molly and Carson were gone. Besides, Kate asked me not to tell you while they were here."

"Was Miss Hilton told of her mother's situation?"

"No; Kate said the girl was suffering terribly. It is a horrible blow to her vanity. But I assure you since I saw the Hoyt blood show in her I think better of her. It was not a mere threat that she made of death. I saw she meant it, and that if driven to extremes she would keep her word."

"I must go to Oscar," said Leszinksky, rising.

"Yes, I think it will be well; there is a look in his face that frightens me. Did you ever think that he might kill Captain Hartley?"

"Oscar once expressed a fear that he would, to Margaret; and Carson believed that he would have done so if he had not been sent away. If the dominie knew what would be the result of Oscar's being made free I do not think he would have sent Friend Fisher to ask for so doubtful a

boon. Has Carisbrooke decided when Lucy is to be moved?"

"Yes; she will go to Longview to-morrow."

"I am glad of that. I could not take Oscar away while she was here and he could be of use. But when she is gone I must get him home at once."

CHAPTER XXX.

"Bounded the fiery steed in air,
The rider sate erect and fair,
Then like a bolt from steel crossbow
Forth launch'd along the plain they go.
They dash'd the rapid torrent through,
And up Carhonie's hill they flew."

IT was a quiet, uneventful winter at "The Cedars." Steenie was a pupil at the convent in Richmond, and Rue was reading industriously with her father. She had objected to going back to Philadelphia, and in the general uncertainty as to public events Leszinksky was glad to devote himself to his daughters.

Every Friday afternoon Rue and her father, on two of the famous Cartaret thoroughbreds, followed by Oscar leading Steenie's pony, arrived punctually at the convent gate—much to the delight of a gaping crowd of idle negroes and small children—unless the weather was stormy. But even then the neighborhood was no less moved; for the high-swung family coach with its four thoroughbreds and two outriders was an equally attractive sensation.

Outside of "The Cedars" the world was less quiet; it marched to a more martial strain. Virginia was still waiting and striving to patch up a peace, but in the distant South "the sound of the trumpet mingled with that of the clarion."

The cotton States had seceded, and their senators and representatives had resigned the places they held at the federal Capitol.

The "Peace Conference," which represented all the border States, had their report summarily voted down in the Senate, while in the House it was contemptuously refused reception.

The State of Virginia had called a convention, which was elected on the 4th of February. The majority of those returned to this assembly were Union men. But the action of the federal Congress upon the report of the "Peace Conference" had so changed the feeling of the State that delegates who were sent as Unionists were now ready to vote for secession. Then came the bloodless affair at Sumter, followed by President Lincoln's proclamation of the 15th of April calling for seventy-five thousand troops. And the secession of Virginia was the immediate result.

Roane made a hurried visit to "The Cedars"

on his way to Arkansas. When Roane left Leszinksky accompanied him as far as Richmond.

Roane only tarried a day in the capital of Virginia, but before he started for Arkansas Leszinksky had tendered his services to Governor Letcher. He was appointed lieutenant-colonel of one of the first regiments raised in the State. That was the third week in April. On the 6th of May Virginia was admitted into the "Southern Confederacy," and the regiment to which Leszinksky belonged was assigned to the brigade of General Robert E. Lee.

One perfect year had been framed in the setting of Rue's stormy life, and then the land was aflame with WAR! The household at "The Cedars" was broken up.

Steenie's home was to be permanently in the convent, and "Mammy Sara" was to go with her delicate nursling.

Despite Leszinksky's feebly-expressed remonstrance Rue decided for herself—she would follow his fortune.

Rue's maid and Oscar completed the camp household. The chances were that Leszinksky's regiment would not leave Virginia, and it would

always be easy to find quarters sufficiently near camp.

Of her father's command Rue knew comparatively nothing. Comradeship would have been possible only with the old regiment; now that old regiment was sure at some time to face them in the fight. That was the one stinging fact she felt pierce the heart of her patriotism. Ah! if they were only with her how gladly would she have fallen into the old grooves. Side by side with them and her father, little would she have recked the leaden rain and the iron thunderbolts of the battle.

Of the war only one scene comes necessarily into our history.

In the earlier battles Colonel Leszinksky had come out unhurt. The brigade to which he belonged had become accustomed to the little group which always waited near the ambulances.

A slight, pale girl with a cold, set face, scarcely conscious of the impatient fretting of the thoroughbred that would have been off with every rattle of musketry had not the hand been as firm as the face was resolute, was always waiting there, attended only by a groom.

A quick glance as the wounded were brought out of the fight, a tightened grasp of the reins, a whitening of the scarlet lips—no other expression; neither question nor murmur, always the same proud, patient composure until the battle ended. Then a rush forward, if it were possible, until she joined a silvery-haired officer. There was a quick look that for these two had all of inquiry, all of reply, a grasp of the hand, and side by side they rode silently until they were alone and speech was unrestrained.

So the time had sped; they had never yet met any of the old comrades, but father and daughter knew they were there, at the front. Day after day the panorama of war was unrolled. They were never out of hearing of the guns and sight of troops.

Even in their infrequent visits to Steenie Rue found that social life in Richmond meant camp life, garrison life, the life of a beleaguered city—a life that from its very intensity was natural, simple, earnest. Conventionalities grew into traditions or took new forms. Everything fashioned itself to suit the change. Men of the heroic type developed under the trials, while the baser sort were more aggressive, more boastful.

Modern and multiplied editions of Falstaff, Bardolph, and Poins were in every camp. Yet as offset many a noble and princely Hal, who had run riot through idleness and the imperfectly trained and untamed energy of youth, broke the bonds that held him and came out of the sulphurous smoke of battle purged and purified by dangers met and self-denial practised in the service of some wounded comrade.

Woman also changed with the time and reflected the time.

The motherhood that had been restricted into the narrow channel of family grew broader and fuller with a boy at the front. The woman's heart overflowed and poured out in kindly deeds. Her life was busy with its sweet charities. She brought cheer and comfort to the soldier stricken down by bullet or disease that destiny brought to her door. Light seemed the task, precious the labor, when she thought for whose sake it was done and to whom the return would be made.

Mothers were not alone in their devotion: wives, sisters, daughters lost what was dearest and bravely took up the burden of the life that was left.

I claim for my countrywomen—and I know that I do not claim too much in so saying—that in all the history of the world no women ever sacrificed so much, suffered so much, endured so much, yet met sacrifice with such cheerfulness. Their heaviest losses were borne with a fortitude and constancy that brought hope to men who were faint and helpless in the presence of ills that seemed too grievous to be borne.

To understand the social life of that time we have to take into consideration the fateful elements of which it was constructed. No mere narrative of daily events can portray life as it really is, if the deeper meanings of resultant effects are not studied. Social life is always of necessity a surface picture; yet we are more in accord with the artist if we know why the shadows deepen and from what point light is reflected.

In those long years active causes, terrible forces, were brought into play, while all softer sounds were drowned in the sobs of the tragedy chorus. In the presence of such elements men led nobler and women more natural lives.

In the camp with its chances, in the battle with its dangers, education went on. Yet reason was

not altogether free; there was of necessity the restraint that grows out of the habitudes of military rule. Thought wore deeper channels, but the channels were in a measure marked and narrowed within fixed limits. Discipline taught the patience that waits on supreme direction.

In the Confederate army each soldier felt the influence of illustrious example. The first captain of the age was also the humblest Christian of his day—peerless in battle, pure in heart, brave because it was his nature to be brave, but confident in his courage because, with the simple faith of a little child, he left results to the Highest.

He did his duty manfully, resolutely, not for man's praise, but for God's approval. How could such a man fail to stamp his likeness on his epoch? So from the highest to the lowest through society, through the army, if men were not ruled by the right they at least respected the right.

A great leader always grows to be the conscience of a people; his character expresses the time, because in a measure he makes and rules it. And so that time could not fail to touch the highest, at least in endeavor, when Lee and Jackson were its exponents.

By the happiest combination of characteristics Jackson's greatness in nowise lessened that of his chief. Each seemed the complement of the other; and thus was preserved the perfect fitness that won their marvellous successes in the field and in camp, through the effect of their characters upon the character of the army. From them the wave circled and widened.

Another influence, less marked because it lacked the brilliant setting of action, though not less real in effect from the example it afforded of fortitude and resolution, was that of the head of the government. It has been so constant a practice since and during the war to misrepresent, slander, and condemn President Davis that the world looks only for such base and baseless attack, and would regard as misplaced praise any expression which did him the most meagre justice. Even his own people have fallen into the mistake of avoidance of his name; and that from no want of affection or grateful appreciation, but for fear it would needlessly rouse more bitter animosity, more envenomed criticism.

Now that this most cowardly of all virtues, discretion, has failed to silence slander, now that the failure is felt, it is the duty of every lover of

honor and truth to declare the fact that Jefferson Davis represented the beliefs of the South. The place of president came to him unsought, unsolicited; his own personal preference was the army. Who that knew him as a soldier in the early days in the Northwest, or later on the plains of Mexico, where his gallantry forced praise and thanks on the battle-field from that stubborn old hero, Gen. Taylor, can doubt what a good sword was lost to the Confederacy when he was made president and his own cherished ambition was laid aside? All of this is easily seen now that we are face to face with results.

In '61 it was difficult to foretell events or their effect upon the future of peoples and States. But few believed in a long duration of the war; consequently it was a grand pageant, at which all assisted.

That hot July day when bullets were flying at Bull Run had failed to teach the South at what cost battles must be won. It had flushed the soldiers with pride and with the rank lust of war. It disorganized and reorganized society, which took upon itself a semi-military state.

In every drawing-room grand campaigns were planned by loiterers who thought it needful to

return to the army only when the enemy's guns sounded a recall. The Richmond drawing-rooms were crowded with volunteer officers who flocked to the city upon the slightest of pretexts, while masses of raw and undisciplined troops represented at the front the bravery and patriotism of the new nation.

All was in an inchoate and unsettled condition, and the discipline of the army was a fluctuating impulse dependent upon the accidents of victory and the temper of its commanders.

One of those commanders was busy with his political aspirations. "Within hearing of the enemy's guns" he was amusing the enemy with his newspaper effusions, declining the nomination as Mr. Davis's successor in the presidential office six years before it was vacant. Yet the harmless vanity of the *poseur* for greatness was less hurtful to his subordinates than the ambition and jealousy of the Bazaine of the South, then in command of the army in Virginia.

The two men who were to weld that army into formidable shape and win for it imperishable renown were yet unknown outside of Virginia.

Lee's only record was that he had patiently sustained reverses while endeavoring to repair the

disaster at Rich Mountain; and Stonewall Jackson, in a subordinate position, was as yet only a vague outline of prophecy.

Leszinksky's regiment had been ordered to Western Virginia in the early summer of '61. After the failure at Cheat Mountain Lee was sent to take charge of the coast defences in South Carolina and Georgia, and Leszinksky's regiment joined General Evans's brigade.

After the battle of Leesburg Leszinksky was promoted and given command of a regiment which was ordered to join General Jackson at Winchester.

From that time he was in constant and active service, being in every engagement during Jackson's famous campaign in the Valley of Virginia until the 10th of June, when he was ordered to Richmond.

McClellan was closing in his advance upon Richmond. The brigade of General Leszinksky (promoted again at the capture of Winchester) was encamped at "The Cedars." Steenie had not been well, and the child begged to come home now that her father was there. In event of a change in the position of the troops she could easily be sent back to the convent. During

Steenie's visit Rue yielded to her father's wish and stayed at "The Cedars," although his division had been ordered some twelve miles away and there was constant skirmishing along the line. The heavy guns were never silent, and the constant movement and massing of troops foretold the nearness of the great struggle for the possession of the Confederate capital.

It was the 26th day of June, 1862. The day had been unusually hot, and Steenie was more restless and impatient than usual; this excitement was telling upon a peculiarly delicate and sensitive organization. General Leszinksky always, if possible, came to his daughters during the evening. This night he came late and brought news of the near approach of the Federal forces. In view of the effect of further excitement on Steenie he insisted on her removal to Richmond; he was anxious and worried, and therefore Rue made no objections. The needful directions were given to the servants, and at midnight General Leszinksky returned to his command, not, however, before Rue had given an order to Oscar that she knew would be obeyed.

"If the battle commences to-morrow stay near your master. Follow him with an extra horse;

he or you may need it. Take 'Grey Duke,' and if anything happens to my father, at the risk of your life come to me here. You can be sure of finding me here."

"Yes, Miss Rue. You kin count'n Oscar's comin' if thar's anything wrong."

"To-morrow night you can tell my father that I am here and that I am waiting to come to him."

"Yes, Miss Rue."

"Do you perfectly understand these directions?"

"Yes,'m. I'se to come fur you if marster's hurt. If he's all right to-morrow night I'se to tell him to send you word whar to come."

Early the next day Steenie and her faithful old nurse left for Richmond under the escort of an invalid officer of her father's brigade. At ten o'clock a brigade from General Jackson's command arrived from the Valley and were met with an order to encamp at "The Cedars." There were old friends of General Leszinksky's in the party, whose families Rue had visited when the war had swept near them. Now she was glad to make them welcome, and the day was shortened from the duties it brought, although that dis-

tant cannonading was never silent! The night passed—no message. They had breakfasted when Rue was told "Oscar is on the porch thar, Miss Rue, waiting to see you." She went directly, extending her hand.

"You have a letter?"

"No, Miss Rue."

"A message?"

"Not exactly a message; marster didn't tole me, but I thought I had better cum."

"You did right to come. Will you know where to find the division?"

"Marster's not gone with the division."

"Well, the brigade?"

"He isn't with the brigade nuther; he's at old Mr. Shirley's 'folks' quarters,' in old Uncle Ben's cabin. Don't be skur'ed, Miss Rue; he's a-livin', but he's hurt mighty bad. Dr. Wilson and ole Uncle Ben's with him; but I did jes' what you tole me, Miss Rue—I come straight fur you."

Trembling and faint, Rue sat down on the steps; the servants crowded around with kindly words.

"Don't, don't cry, Miss Rue; don't cry, honey! Marster'll get well. You'll find him

all right. 'Tain't long since Oscar lef' him; he mos' killed 'Grey Duke' a-comin'."

She had no time for grief—that must come after—so resolutely she got on her feet.

"When did you leave my father?"

"Jes' about nine o'clock. I wa'n't much mor'n an hour a-comin'. We can get thar, Miss Rue, 'fore noon."

"Saddle 'Kubleh' for me; you must ride 'Blackhawk.' We have no time to lose."

She turned and met her guests; they had heard the news.

"What could they do?"

"Nothing, gentlemen. Yes: general, please write me a pass; it may prevent delay."

In ten minutes Rue and Oscar were off. Much as she wished it, she dared not go at racing speed. The horses must not give out. If troops were in the way it might double, treble the distance to be traversed; fifteen miles might stretch into thirty, or even fifty. Oscar's knowledge of wood-paths and cross-cuts was of great help. Twice they were halted; the pass must be shown. The last time the officer, having read it, said:

"I have seen you on several battle-fields, Miss

Leszinksky. The boy says your father is shot; I hope not fatally?"

The rude question was kindly meant, but the words "your father is shot" for a moment staggered Rue as if she had received a blow. Then a resolute effort of will and she was riding on "to the front," leaving distance behind. Only two miles more—two miles—and she would be with her father. Every pulse beat, every nerve quivered with eager hope and desire, every thought was a prayer only to reach him, to find him alive and conscious.

Again the road swarmed with troops. Beyond were heavy guns to which they were harnessing fresh horses; passing them was impossible for the present, so again she turned into the tobacco and corn fields.

Just at the head of the narrow gorge through which her path led she suddenly rode into a group of Confederate officers lying at ease under cover of the undergrowth of scrub-oak and hazel-bushes which fringed the hillside.

The creek in the ravine ran in a southeasterly direction. On the brow of the hill, or rather heights, on the right were newly-constructed earthworks held by the Confederate forces. The

creek was nearly at the base of this ascent, with only the road between.

On the left of the creek the valley was possibly some fifty feet wide; then there was a gradual ascent through an open woods that had, however, a close fringe of willows on the bank. Three-quarters of a mile down the ravine, or gorge, a little rivulet cut the hillside on the left of the creek, and below it rose suddenly a bold, high cliff; around that a bridle-path led to the "folks' quarters" of the Shirley estate. There in old Ben's house was General Leszinksky.

Within an instant after Rue came upon the group of officers they were around her. Many of them she knew slightly. She could see they understood how terribly she was stricken. Kindly hands were extended. General Stuart, as he lifted her from her horse, said:

"Your father is inside the enemy's line. There was a blunder as to orders after he fell, and the hill down below the gap is in possession of the Federals. So are the woods on the left of the creek. Fortunately the Stonewall brigade hold the heights on this side. We are massing troops here to dislodge the enemy. Pelham's battery is there on that knoll, just getting

into position. Before night we will take you to your father, if they have not removed him."

"Is my father mortally wounded?"

"I trust and hope not. I saw one of his aids. He thinks the enemy may not find General Leszinsky. Old Ben is faithful and trustworthy, and Dr. Wilson is there."

"General, I must go to my father."

"You cannot. I dare not permit you. It is not an hour since the enemy were driven back in an attempt to storm the heights. This is only the lull before a fresh storm. Here is Pelham. He will tell you it would be madness to attempt to go down that gorge. Major Pelham—Miss Leszinksky, the daughter of General Leszinksky. You know, major, he is wounded and at the Shirley quarters. You will tell Miss Leszinksky how utterly impossible it is for her to go there."

"Major, my father is desperately wounded; he has no son, so I, his daughter, have the right to dare all, to risk all, to reach him. Only one mile to go!—only one mile, and my thoroughbred will do it in less than two minutes."

"Not down that rocky valley. If it were at all possible no one would stay you a second.

But you would risk almost certain death. War is no longer chivalry—it is *war*."

"I would rather die in the way than wait—than fail my father in his need."

"If it were possible I would send a flag of truce. There are United States regulars on the hill—General Carson's brigade."

"Oh! I know him well. I am his goddaughter. I was born and brought up with his old regiment. You see how safe it would be for me."

"If they knew you, yes; but in the woods between are Connecticut volunteers. As a soldier's daughter you must know we cannot send a flag now during an engagement. In a few hours the hottest of the fight will probably be here. General Carson will hold the cliff stubbornly. If you will be patient we will all do our utmost to make the waiting short. General, let me see you one instant."

A few moments, and as Major Pelham crossed the open space below where Rue waited a volley of bullets whistled by. Oscar was rubbing the foam from "Kubleh's" flanks, whilst a soldier held the bridle of "Blackhawk." Rue called Oscar as a scout came up to the general to report. Her directions were quickly given:

"See to the girths, then put me up. Do not try to follow me; it would endanger us both. Come to-night if it is possible. You know the country well enough to pass the pickets."

"Yes, Miss Rue; you can 'pend on me."

The general came with the information:

"The enemy are crowding reinforcements to this point and to the left. I must leave; but Pelham will keep his promise. Now I must send you back with an escort."

Rue beckoned Oscar and he put her upon "Kubleh." Gathering the reins hastily before the others should mount, she moved toward the path down the hillside, saying:

"General, you have done your duty as gentleman and soldier. I must do mine as a soldier's daughter. I am going down that ravine—straight to my father."

And she was off, down the hillside where the bridle-path wound through the bushes into the road, calling back to them:

"Do not come after me; you will make the danger greater: you will only draw on me the enemy's fire."

Seeing them halt, she recklessly rode on—the thoroughbred at racing speed—one hundred

yards, and as she crossed an opening between the willows on the bank there rained a shower of bullets. The distance before she must cross the creek was nearly made when "Kubleh" stumbled.

The mare quickly recovered, but the speed slackened. Was she shot? Rue did not know. Still the balls whistled by. Not a sound from the Confederates on the heights until then, when the shells screamed over Rue and she knew Pelham was trying to clear the woods to her left.

But there on the cliff were the marksmen of the plains. One volley from them and her doom was sealed. How to make them know her? how to live long enough to reach her father? Only to reach her father—she had no thought, no care but that. As she turned to cross the creek a ball touched her. It took her hat and unbound her hair. Again "Kubleh" staggered, then struggled on. How to make them understand?—Bob Stearns and those men up there, who would rather die than harm her. Yes; she thought it out at last—an old trick they had taught her. They had called it "Captain Rue's Salute."

Riding now steadily, slowly, perfectly erect, that they might see, she took the bridle in her teeth, and bending her whip, holding it as the arc of a bow with her arms high over head, on she rode, steadily on, slowly up the slope. For a minute the firing of Federals and Confederates had ceased. One minute, then a sharp volley whistled from the left. As that sound died, above from the cliff stalwart men swarmed down, Bob Stearns's voice bellowing out:

"It's Cap'n Rue, and them damned volunteers keep firing at her. STOP IT! STOP IT!! or we'll sweep you to h—l."

The thoroughbred had won her last race—won it with a bullet through her.

As the mare fell Rue was caught in strong arms and carried up the cliff, while a wild, piercing Confederate yell from the earthworks across the ravine rang out congratulation. Unhurt, safe, in the centre of a group of men who were sobbing around her like children.

Rue looked in their faces through blinding tears, gasping brokenly:

"My father is down there in the Shirley quarters, desperately wounded. Will you take me to him? They tried to stop me up there—Gene-

ral Stuart and Major Pelham—but I would come. I thought you would know me; some one would be sure to remember."

Here General Carson broke through the circle and the men fell back. He took Rue in his arms and kissed her. In a few moments she was with her father, crying tears of mingled grief and joy.

CHAPTER XXXI.

"No more in soldier fashion will he greet
With lifted hand the gazer in the street.
. . . . . .
Oh! fallen at length that tower of strength
Which stood four square to all the winds that blew."

IN a sheltered spot, out of reach of the storm of battle which raged furiously, they pitched a tent, and there they carried Leszinksky. Words fail in telling the kindness of those rough men, the loving sympathy of his old comrades among the officers.

At times, in a half-conscious waking, he seemed to recognize the old, familiar faces, and then would talk in broken sentences of the camp out there, of the life on the plains, and of Margaret. All between was effaced.

At nightfall came General Carson, calling Rue to one side:

"We are going to move from here, Rue. Which had you rather do, my child—go with us or try to get your father home?"

"Home, if possible; when my father is fully

conscious he will want my sister. But how am I to get him to 'The Cedars' ?"

"Those Connecticut fellows are coming over here to hold the cliff—if they can when Jackson wants it. You know their colonel—Bradnor, the 'swamped' lieutenant. Of course the dandy has everything they will give at the War Department. He has the best ambulance in the service. I will ask him for it. He will hardly dare refuse me, and I will leave Bob and three of the men with you. Oh ! did you know Oscar has got in with a horse of yours ?"

"He is unhurt ?"

"Yes ; he flanked your pickets and ours, and made it safely. I believe a negro would squeeze through a snake-hole to pass a picket-line. Can he drive well ?"

"Yes, rapidly and carefully."

"Then he can drive the ambulance. Your father can have the doctor in with him. I can mount two of the men, and they can change with the others. Two must walk by the ambulance. These Virginian gullies are something to cross. You have the horse Oscar brought, and you know the Confederate officers in front of us. The only trouble will be when these volunteers of ours

leave (and they will leave, with Jackson over there). Stearns can hold your horses and ambulance until then; but in the rush of the rebels?"

"Major Pelham is sure to remember that we are here. We will be safe with the Confederate advance, but Bob and the men—"

"Must see you home. There is no time to change escorts in a fight, and this one is no child's play. The men must take their chance about getting back to the brigade. I will have to parole your father and Dr. Wilson; then Bradnor can make no difficulty about it."

"I do not need to thank you, general?"

"Yes, you do, Rue; it's confounded hard to give you up. *D—n the war!*"

"You forget I have a way of catching your expressions. They brought me to grief once, and that last is tempting."

"You know we all love you, Rue, but I don't think you realize how devotedly. If you are in any need, if any help is wanted, let us know; we will come to you, if possible. If it is impossible, some one will come—Molly or Mrs. Carisbrooke. Good-by, my child. May God spare your father!"

Colonel Bradnor came with offer of help, with words of sympathy, all courteous attention to Miss Leszinksky, to Dr. Wilson, and the most considerate kindness to General Leszinksky. He anticipated every possible want. Until then Rue had let liking be ruled by attraction and repulsion. She now thought that an unjust prejudice had blinded her to Bradnor's good qualities, so she forced a reversal of judgment, or rather forced judgment to the other extreme, and credited the man with every chivalrous, every noble quality.

General Carson had said truly—the Connecticut brigade did leave when Jackson advanced in the early morning. They did not stand upon the order of their going. In an instant, it seemed, after hearing that wild rebel yell there was a rush of pursuers and pursued.

The Stonewall brigade were in the advance. There was a hurried greeting, and the little party were left to wait until the division had passed and then commence their slow movement homeward.

Rue was on "Blackhawk," escorted by Bob and one of the men. The two others walked by the ambulance. Doctor Wilson was in it with Les-

zinksky. Oscar was driving. Slowly they passed up the ravine. On the heights was a division unknown to Rue. Her father had grown faint; they stopped.

Bob and the men were standing a little apart when an officer and his staff rode up to them and asked:

"Are you prisoners? Where are your passes?"

Bob answered: "We ain't got no passes, and we ain't prisoners, so be an' Cap'n Rue don't keer to make us sich."

"Then what the h—l are you doing here in that Yankee uniform?"

"It's ourn. We belong to the United States regulars. 'Tain't exackly a parade uniform (we ain't got on our best), but this is good enough to fight in. Nobody's complained on it yet."

"You d—d impudent Yankee, I'll put you in irons—I'll—"

Rue rode in front of the men.

"I am Miss Leszinksky. My father, General Leszinksky, of General Jackson's division, was wounded yesterday and taken prisoner. He was paroled by General Carson, of the United States regulars, and these men were left with us as

escort and protectors when General Carson retreated."

"Very well, miss. You do not need the protection of Yankees now. I will give you an escort. These men are my prisoners. I will not have such impudent scoundrels loose here in that uniform."

"They are not prisoners. They were given as an escort to my father, and you touch his honor if you fail to treat them with the courtesy due to gallant men who are here in obedience to the order of their general."

A young officer touched Rue's arm and said in a low tone:

"Your appeal to that man is useless, Miss Leszinksky. He does not understand the code of gentlemen Do you know General Lee?"

"Yes."

"There he comes across that field with those officers. Go to him."

She rode rapidly to meet the advancing group. General Lee stopped.

"Miss Leszinksky, to meet you here proves that your father is better than I had feared. Pelham told me of your desperate ride. Were you any other than your father's daughter I

should compliment your noble devotion. To your father's daughter I can only say you have fulfilled his expectation and mine."

"Thanks. My father is there in that ambulance, badly wounded, unconscious most of the time. I come to ask a favor."

"It is granted before the asking. I have faith in your discretion."

"Did you know my father was a prisoner with the regulars of his old regiment?"

"Yes; Pelham told me they were there. I know Carson."

"Then you know how kind he is and what gallant men they are—officers and soldiers. I was brought up with them. General Carson feared I might need assistance and protection, and he left with me four men of our old command. There were changes of troops before General Jackson captured the heights, so these men were needed to keep the ambulance—you see they gave us an ambulance. And now an officer there, the one near the ambulance, has ordered the men held as prisoners. He threatened to put them in irons. Will you permit it?"

"Certainly not!"

And he rode on with Rue rapidly to where they had dismounted Bob.

"Colonel, who are those Federal soldiers?"

"They are my prisoners, sir."

"Where did you capture them?"

"Here."

"I did not know your regiment had been engaged. From what command did you capture them?"

"From no command, sir; these were inside of our lines."

"A safe place to capture prisoners. I trust you will do as well at the front. Who is in that ambulance?"

"A wounded officer, sir—General Leszinksky."

"Did you not know these men were given to him by a brave enemy as a guard of honor?"

He hesitated, then commenced a muttered "I knew they were in the Yankee uniform."

"Did you not know they were with a wounded general officer and his daughter?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then, sir, report yourself under arrest."

The superb gentleman took off his hat to Bob and the men.

"You are gallant and brave men. As a soldier I honor you. Will you excuse the blunder in your reception?"

"It don't make no difference, sir; you see I never expect much of volunteers. Now, I'd a-know'd you was a reg'lar, sir, anywhar. I'm powerful glad we come up with you. You see we'd a-been disapp'inted and the regiment would a-been disapp'inted if we hadn't a-seen Cap'n Rue and the major safe in quarters."

"Who is Captain Rue?"

"She's thar, sir. She's our child. You see her father was our old major, and her mother was one o' God's angels. Never a poor woman sick on the frontier thar—even so be an' 'twas an Injun—but she helped her. Nothing ever hurt the regiment like when she died, an' we jes' took her darter for ourn. An' you see what we made on her, sir. If you'd a-seen her yesterday, sir, riding down that gorge, her father behind us thar, sir, hard hit, and we didn't know it! An' we didn't know her, sir. We saw them damned volunteers—beg pardon, sir—a-firing at somebody. And then we saw it was a woman, so we didn't shoot, sir. God's marcy, sir, we didn't! She jus' rode slow at us—*slow*, sir—an' they a-fir-

ing at her, till we knowed who she was. Then, sir, if they'd a-killed her there wouldn't a-bin one on them left this side of hell, sir—beg pardon, sir."

"Tell your regiment how I respect, how I honor them. They are kind as they are brave. When you have seen your captain home and have had time to try her hospitality I will send you back with a flag of truce and a letter for your general. Until then you are Captain Rue's prisoners. Miss Leszinksky, Captain Baskerville will go with you to 'The Cedars.' I do not think there is another man in the army would give you any trouble, but we will risk nothing."

Then he rode to the ambulance, talked with Dr Wilson a few moments, and was gone.

It was night when the sad little company reached "The Cedars." When they were within three miles of the house Rue rode rapidly forward with her escort to prepare for her father. She found the house nearly filled with wounded officers. The division encamped there on the 27th was gone, and roughly-built wooden sheds had been put up and tents hurriedly pitched to shelter the wounded who had been able to bear the removal this far from the battle-field.

The beautiful lawn sloped from the house to a wooded creek which wound in many twisting backward folds through the plantation before it was finally lost in a larger and more sluggish stream that crept through swamps and deep morasses to the Chickahominy. The crowded house and the noisy lawn determined Rue to take the library for her father.

It was in a quiet wing, half-detached from the old mansion by a square hall which made a private entrance to the library while separating it from the main building. It opened in front upon a garden, or pleasaunce, as it was called in early colonial times, and was hidden from view, and almost from sound, of the tents on the lawn by a close, thick hedge of old clipped cedars and a tangle of untrimmed cedars beyond the hedge, which, with the scattered clumps of loftier trees that dotted the grounds, gave its name to the estate.

Behind the library a grassy slope of velvety turf stretched in long, billowy rolls to the pebbled bank of the encircling creek.

A hedge, so wide that it seemed rather a strip of tangled undergrowth and dwarfed cedars, entirely defended these grounds from view or en-

trance from the offices and outbuildings which were behind the opposite wing.

At nine o'clock the ambulance arrived. Rue's hurried arrangements were all completed, and in less than half an hour her father was in the bed she had prepared, and with him were the surgeons, who had been hastily called from their quarters on the lawn to the consultation in the library.

Shut out from her father's presence Rue's first thought was to send for Steenie; and then she busied herself with other tasks—with care of the wounded in the house, and with the preparation and distribution of things needed in the meagrely-provided hospital tents, and with arrangements for Bob and her escort.

Notwithstanding Rue's intensity and the zeal with which she undertook these new duties, there was in everything she did thought of her father, but thought that was entirely unlike the confident looking forward to affectionate approval which had been so large an influence in her life. Now there was a half-formed sub-consciousness that she was doing what her father would have wished her to do, at terrible cost to herself, and that he might never know, might never under-

stand, that it was because of his teaching, and of her love for him and reverence for his teaching, that she was forcing herself to think of duty. To think of duty when she knew she was about to lose the father who had always been nearer and dearer to her than all others! From her babyhood he had been her idol. Her friendships had always been loves, but her father had been supreme in her life. For his sake she had put aside sorrows that she had never forgotten.

But with the thought of his loss—and the thought had been present with her as a conviction from the instant she had understood that he was wounded—came the old griefs.

When the work she had set herself was finished she went into the hall next the library to wait for the coming of the surgeons, who were still there. She could hear quick steps upon the uncarpeted floor and subdued voices. Then in a still interval she heard a gasping moan. With a shriek, which even in that outburst of agony she tried to repress, she fell senseless on the floor. Dr. Wilson found her there. They carried her to her room, and when she recovered consciousness pain and grief were lost in the dull lethargy produced by narcotics.

BOOK THIRD.

FIDUS ET AUDAX.

"*Phœbus volentem prœlia me loqui,*
Victas et urbes, increpuit lyra;
Ne parva Tyrrhenum per æquor
Vela darem."

—HORACE, liber iv. ode xv.

PART FIRST, '61 TO '68.

THE PANORAMA OF WAR.

CHAPTER XXXII.

"A greater power than we can contradict
Hath thwarted our intents."

THE messenger sent for Steenie the day after her father was brought home to "The Cedars" found her with Mrs. Hartley. The noise of the cannonade and the knowledge that her father was in the battle had such effect upon the nervous, delicate child that the sisters at the convent had yielded to Mrs. Hartley's entreaty that Steenie might stay with her until the battle, which must decide the fate of Richmond, should be lost or won.

Kate and Anne Warrington were domiciled with a maiden lady, a kinswoman of the Warringtons. For a picture of the past and the reason of Kate's residence in Richmond I will transcribe two letters lying upon Kate's desk—one from Mrs. Carisbrooke and an unfinished reply, which were hastily gathered up and carried to "The Cedars" when the messenger arrived at Miss Esmond's, whither he had been sent from the convent:

(*Mrs. Carisbrooke to Mrs. Hartley from St. Catherine's Wells, Canada, May* 10, 1862.)

"My dear Kate: A Kentucky friend has offered to send any letters I could have ready for Richmond to-morrow with assurance of their safe and speedy arrival. I shall obey the instructions you gave Mrs. Cartaret and send this care of Miss Esmond, Richmond, with whom Mrs. Cartaret thinks you and Anne Warrington may be staying. I am assured that it will be put in her hands.

"I have had no news of you since Mrs. Cartaret left you at Belleview in March and so successfully ran the blockade while McClellan was watching Johnston's Quaker guns. That exceedingly limited note which Mrs. Cartaret enclosed in a letter from Oakhill is the only scrap of your writing I have seen since I parted with you in Washington last September.

"Mrs. Cartaret wrote me that she left Anne Warrington at Belleview; and she also wrote of this second burning of 'Castlewood.' You will know how sorry we were to hear of that loss. It is one that must affect all Virginians; for the home of the Esmond-Warringtons was the scene of many famous gatherings of the old

colonial gentry, and there were found the MS. notes of that wonderful autobiography of their illustrious ancestor which Mr. Thackeray has so happily edited. It is a matter of congratulation to us all that the old family portraits were saved.

"My dear rebel friend, if this burning goes on it will disturb and possibly kill my known loyalty.

"Now, you know that I was particularly disgusted with Southern assumption before and after the battle of Bull Run, just as I had been with the contemptuous phrases with which the Northern newspapers were filled *apropos* of 'chivalry' and of 'fleet-footed Virginians.'

"I assure you, my Kate, that after you left us I was in the most vibratory state of mind. I had become impressed with the idea that I was the only sane person of my acquaintance; and when the wildly insane of the Northern or Southern incurables opened up in my presence in rabid abuse of the unfortunate section which their geographical lunacy opposed, why somehow, before I was exactly conscious a dispute was begun, I was in the thick of a wordy battle.

"The only peculiarity in my case was the double lunacy. My interlocutors had one indi-

visible and well-defined mania. In spite of myself I had either two or none. Before a battle I was for both sections. After the lists of the killed and wounded came, I was ready to cry out with Mercutio, 'A plague o' both your houses.'

"If I had gone South with you, Kate, what a Unionist I should have become! It would have completely reunited the Cincinnati 'house of the Carisbrookes.'

"Confidentially I will tell you that Carisbrooke and Molly are *nearly* rabid. Carisbrooke was always a Federalist; and Molly, through sympathy with 'Red-head,' out-Herods Carisbrooke and completely distances 'Red-head' himself. He, poor fellow, is my only support in my opposing household. He—well, he *dashes* the Abolitionists, and fights sturdily on because of the flag above him and the one that challenges it across the way.

"To prove to you how broad-church I have become in these modern days I need only mention that I smile patiently when 'Red-head's' *dashes* are most resonantly audible.

"Now for what I hear from Paris.

"My friend's news is told in this wise

"'The great sensation of Paris is the beautiful

Miss Hilton, whom I met at Molly's wedding. Her beauty and her eccentricities are a wonder to the French, and even startle the American colony. Were she one atom less beautiful the "eccentricities" would be quickly transposed into "shocking imprudences." But when a woman is a living, breathing goddess she is above the plane of feminine jealousy. It is now a thing of national pride to challenge the world with her perfections. It seems she quarrelled with Mrs. Cartaret, whose first husband was her relative, and thus lost a discreet chaperone—a chaperone rated in Paris (outside of the colony) as entirely *comme il faut.* Since then Miss Hilton has a sheep-dog—a retired governess promoted to companion. This would be sufficient for an emancipated young married woman, but it is hardly the thing for a young girl who drives in the Bois in the centre of a cavalcade of admirers.

"'Even the philosophic "colony" smiled cynically last week when they saw a young American officer by her side and the "sheep-dog" alone on the opposite seat, its innocent pug cocked at the passers-by or else turned with a mildly contemplative glance at the lake-side.

"'The goddess plays the American against the fast and disreputable—if dukes can be disreputable—Duc de Rameaux. It is currently reported that she is engaged to the man of buttons, but is ready to throw him over for a ducal title and a place at court. Query, Will the duc propose? That depends! Is Miss Hilton an heiress? If she is not I suppose her engagement with the young officer will bloom into orange-flowers another season.'

"My conclusion, from what my correspondent writes, is that the engagement is real—real, unless the grandchild of the prince of gamblers shuffles a court-card from the pack of—followers. But I suppose you know more of Miss Hilton, *née* Hoyt, than I do. Mrs. Cartaret went straight to you when she returned from Paris last January.

"How queer seems this talk of dukes and Miss Hilton with Lucy sitting by the window sewing! I am sure you will be glad that she is much better. We brought her home from the asylum in March, and Carisbrooke thought she had best come with me here.

"I will let the subject slip off my table. There are other bits to write you. You have heard the

senile raptures of grandmothers, and you shall not catch me sinning that fashion. But I do wish, my Kate, you could see the infant that bears the name Carisbrooke Carson. I think the abbreviation far prettier, and to please me Molly calls my grandson 'Brooke.' Of course there are, and have been, wonderful exhibitions of infantile wisdom in the house since he came, 'trailing his clouds of glory.' But for the telling of these things look not to me. Since I left home—to cool my own and my neighbors' tempers—I have pages from Molly that are chronicles of the book of perfections she is busy compiling. You will be surprised to hear that Carisbrooke himself is no wiser. I did not think to live to see his premature dotage.

"I suppose I ought to end this letter without a word of military comment. I cannot resist the whisper of a question. Do you not think *we* have so set our nets that we shall catch Richmond? If we do capture the virgin city what will you do, my Kate? That you could not go to Paris with Mrs. Cartaret and leave your people at Belleview to the chances of war I easily understand. That you would not stay in Washington without her I also understood. But now

Mrs. Cartaret is at Oakhill. Will you not come there, Kate?

"I will offer you a bribe. If you will come to Oakhill, *when the road to Richmond is opened*, I will meet you there and stay until after peace is made. Frankly, I would not care to be in Cincinnati while peace is a-making. I am sure I should turn secessionist or mad with the cackle I should hear. At Oakhill you and Julia and I would go into mourning for the 'nation that had not the strength to be born.'

"Now, Kate, my dainty Kate, write, 'an thou lovest me.' I know you can and will find a trustworthy bearer of despatches. And do not fail to write news of Leszinksky, and Rue, and Steenie. Where is Roane? You can direct here —*until the road opens*—for I will not return to Cincinnati until the *malady that brought me here is cured.*

"Always yours,

"VIRGINIA CARISBROOKE."

(*Mrs. Hartley to Mrs. Carisbrooke from Richmond, June* 25, 1862.)

"MY DEAR MRS. CARISBROOKE: To prove to you how glad I was at sight of your letter I

have only just finished the reading and am already commencing an answer. It will have to be written in patchwork fashion.

"The excitement here is too great for me to settle steadily even to a talk on paper with you. Everybody in the town is in some way busy with the preparations for the defence of Richmond—which, let me assure you now, your people will *not* capture. But I do not believe one iota of what you say of your Unionism. Blood is thicker than water, and you are a Virginian. So hereafter when I say *your* people I shall mean us.

"I am glad you have quarrelled with your bloodthirsty Yankee neighbors. You might as well have told me the story: I know you have quarrelled with every one of them, else why are you in St. Catherine's with a *malady that has no name?* It must have been a battle-royal before they routed you. Yes, I know it all: *you were routed*, horse, foot, and dragoons, or you would never have retreated from before the enemy. Let me console you with one reflection: we are fighting your battle here, and we will win it.

"When General McClellan is captured, or flies before Stonewall Jackson's foot-cavalry, you can go back to Cincinnati in a most serene and for-

giving state of mind. It makes me laugh to think of the amiable manner with which you will salute your neighbors, and the grum and reluctant way with which they will receive your sisterly advances. O my dearly beloved Virginia! you cannot go back of your certificate of birth and baptism. Your 'State' is your mother and your godmother. Yet for Molly's sake and for Doctor Carisbrooke's (how *did* he ever get so twisted?) you may smile your very sweetest at your foes on 'the hill' after we have made Richmond as mournful a sound to them as Bull Run was last summer. Don't I know? Did I not walk down to the Potomac and *glorify* at the return of the champagne brigade who had gone out to see Beauregard captured and to take their luncheon on the battle-field? And did I not smile at women who, I knew, were wishing they could strangle me?

. . . . . .

"I stopped writing just here to see a brigade of Mississippians go by. They were with Jackson in the Valley. I can hear the people shouting down the street as the battle-scarred flags float out and show who they are and where they have been.

"You, who knew Richmond in its old 'Sleepy Hollow' days, would never think it the same town. When I for an instant forget our surroundings and put on my bonnet for a 'constitutional,' the moment the front door is closed behind me I find myself in a military camp—soldiers everywhere, and in these last two months heavy guns always passing through the city. There is a constant tramp, tramp of infantry and the clash of cavalry sabres as the horsemen go by.

"I make morning calls and find every drawing-room crowded with officers—not merely those on duty here, but those sent here on army requirements. There are also navy officers waiting for ships. When they are to get them is the question. If I were a man I would volunteer in the trenches sooner than stand idly by and let some one else win my independence for me.

"How delighted you would be, despite your *Unionism*, with the spirit of *our women!* Not a break in the line; no faltering where sacrifice is called for. They have dropped their pettinesses and affectations as they would in other days have discarded obsolete fashions.

"All are alike, high and low, rich and poor,

doing their very best; and it is something to see such women at their best. It makes one feel that the country is worth living and dying for. Without that how terrible would be these scenes: these broken families, the suffering wounded, and, worst of all, the dead—*our dead*—that we are all resolved shall not have died in vain!

"A little over a year ago we laughed at society doing the military and at the declamatory talk of pretty viragoes; six months, we thought, would finish the worry. A year has gone since then—a year—with the end no nearer. But the pretty viragoes are changed; they are patient women now, prayerfully waiting events, taking up earnestly the duties of each hour. The most frivolous are hushed and awe-stricken in the presence of the griefs that are in our midst. Poor little butterflies! the gloss is brushed from their wings.

"*June* 27.—But you want personal news of your relatives and your old friends. General Leszinksky has been at 'The Cedars,' or near there, for the last two weeks. He was in the Valley with Jackson and was promoted this month for 'gallantry in the field.' He now commands a brigade which was camped at 'The Cedars' until last week. Three days ago he was in Richmond.

I met him on the hill near Mr. Davis's residence. He was on horseback, riding with a gentleman in a plain gray suit who wore no insignia of rank. As I bowed they rode over to the sidewalk to speak to me, and under the slouch hat of General Leszinksky's companion I recognized the calm, grand face and soft, dark eyes of our commanding general. Our talk was the very briefest, but your cousin asked if I 'had any news of the Carisbrookes and Carson.' He said he would send Rue and Steenie to Richmond, and promised they might come with me from the convent if 'things grew dangerous.' I looked at General Lee as I said, 'You mean if the enemy are likely to take the city?' I did not mean to ask *him* the question, but he answered it: 'Do not be alarmed. You are safe in Richmond. *These people* will be captured or driven back to Hampton Roads.' Then we shook hands and I walked on with tearful eyes and a swelling in my throat. '*These people will be crushed or driven,' but oh! at what cost.*

"Yesterday Mammy Sara came and brought me a note from Rue. General Leszinksky had directed her to come with Steenie to Richmond. She sent Steenie, but Rue would not come.

I think it is the first time she ever disobeyed her father. He must doubt the result; at least there is apprehension when he sends his daughters to town. And 'The Cedars' are further from the enemy than the enemy is from Richmond. Mammy Sara said that Steenie was ill from pure fright and nervousness, so Anne Warrington and I went to the convent for the child. The sisters let her come with us, and she is now out with Anne and Miss Esmond.

"I thank you for news from Paris.

"I am fond of Mai in a way that I cannot make you understand, unless your feminine intuition has already given to you the whys and wherefores. I pray she may marry wisely—wisely meaning a marriage of affection, not ambition.

"It is pitiful when one thinks how few are drawn together, and so heavenward, by a love that touches the soul. We are all, or almost all, of the earth, earthy; and so we go on stooping in constant search of the dross that glitters, and we forget to look upward for the light and warmth that come from heaven. So the eyes see only the things for which the baser senses cry out, and we are blinded by the darkness in which

we have lived—so blinded that if we are turned at last to the light we stumble.

"I have already said something of what the war is doing in the way of transformation; I was about to add Rue as an example. But Rue is simply Rue—nothing more nor less than she was. The war is but the sombre setting of a peerless jewel; the dark background only brings its facets into full relief.

"The rich heiress of 'The Cedars' is the most unselfish and simple-minded woman I have ever known. She is also one of the most scholarly and unpretentious. She was reading with her father the winter before the war. Since then she has been a hard and constant student in every spare moment. When I laughed at her heavy reading she said, with that slight flush and resolute look you know: 'I do not care for the books—I am sorry I do not—but I do care to be my father's companion and comrade, and I wish to understand a subject that is of such interest to him.' The books were on military history and military tactics! I remember your saying she ought to be queen of Poland. With what strengthened conviction you would say it now! She has no rose-and-lily beauty; nothing to sug-

gest comparison with the girl your correspondent describes as a goddess. But Rue has the most wonderfully refined and spiritual face. It is a dainty, delicate face at first view, an Ariel face; but I heard an artist say last week—an artist who had seen her riding by her father's side at Leesburg under the fire of the enemy's artillery: you see even our artists are soldiers now—that her face was 'an inspiration and a revelation; one only needed to see it to understand the battle-face of the young girl who led the French to victory.'

"I could, and would if I were with you, talk of Rue for hours, but I must tell you of your other friends.

"General Roane is in Richmond, or rather out on the line of Richmond's defences. He is in Longstreet's division, and was with him at Williamsburg, where he took five guns from *your* General Hooker. When you hear of Longstreet's next victory, which I trust and believe you will this week, you will forget your *Unionism* long enough to rejoice in your friend's success.

"General Roane is and has been very kind to me. On his way from Williamsburg, after he

had whipped Hooker, he stopped at Belleview, sending one of his aids to Richmond to ask my permission to send the servants here and with them everything of any value. The house, he said, would probably be in the line of the enemy's march (they occupy it now; a servant who had been left there slipped the lines and brought me the news), and the able-bodied negro men had better come here. I sent him discretionary powers. The result is, the greater number of the servants and everything of value have been sent to Danville. Mr. Robert Carisbrooke is there with his family, and he has been most kind —as he always is and has been. Having been my father's executor, it seems right and proper for me to transfer my worries to him.

"I dined with Rue at 'The Cedars' the day after they arrived from the Valley. General Roane was there. He is kind and thoughtful and watchful for me, as his going to Belleview proved. But his courtesy is distant, and there is an embarrassing quality in his manner that I cannot well describe and that would be difficult to define.

"*He never mentions Major Hartley*, nor do any of the family at 'The Cedars'—which brings

gest comparison with the girl your correspondent describes as a goddess. But Rue has the most wonderfully refined and spiritual face. It is a dainty, delicate face at first view, an Ariel face; but I heard an artist say last week—an artist who had seen her riding by her father's side at Leesburg under the fire of the enemy's artillery: you see even our artists are soldiers now—that her face was 'an inspiration and a revelation; one only needed to see it to understand the battle-face of the young girl who led the French to victory.'

"I could, and would if I were with you, talk of Rue for hours, but I must tell you of your other friends.

"General Roane is in Richmond, or rather out on the line of Richmond's defences. He is in Longstreet's division, and was with him at Williamsburg, where he took five guns from *your* General Hooker. When you hear of Longstreet's next victory, which I trust and believe you will this week, you will forget your *Unionism* long enough to rejoice in your friend's success.

"General Roane is and has been very kind to me. On his way from Williamsburg, after he

had whipped Hooker, he stopped at Belleview, sending one of his aids to Richmond to ask my permission to send the servants here and with them everything of any value. The house, he said, would probably be in the line of the enemy's march (they occupy it now; a servant who had been left there slipped the lines and brought me the news), and the able-bodied negro men had better come here. I sent him discretionary powers. The result is, the greater number of the servants and everything of value have been sent to Danville. Mr. Robert Carisbrooke is there with his family, and he has been most kind —as he always is and has been. Having been my father's executor, it seems right and proper for me to transfer my worries to him.

"I dined with Rue at 'The Cedars' the day after they arrived from the Valley. General Roane was there. He is kind and thoughtful and watchful for me, as his going to Belleview proved. But his courtesy is distant, and there is an embarrassing quality in his manner that I cannot well describe and that would be difficult to define.

"*He never mentions Major Hartley*, nor do any of the family at 'The Cedars'—which brings

me to a question I wish to ask: Have you ever heard of Major Hartley's saying publicly that my residence in Virginia 'was in opposition to his wishes and entreaties, and that he would be glad if the separation were completed by a divorce'? It is told in Richmond that he said it, and the reason given is that 'he is going over to the Republican party.' Miss Esmond heard it and very properly told it to me.

"I cannot talk of this to General Leszinksky, and there is no one else here I could ask.

"Can this be a reason for General Roane's changed manner?

"You can learn the truth and you will tell it to me.

"You know that I came South with Captain Hartley's approbation. Of course I wanted to come, but I would have gone with Julia to Paris if he had advised it. He did advise the very course I would have chosen, and I came here because of his counsel. He gave me reasons that I supposed really influenced his opinion. He said that the negroes might leave Belleview or be seized by the Confederate government if none of the family were in the South. Did you not hear the subject mentioned when you were in Wash-

ington? I could write to Julia, but she loves me, I think, better than she loves her brother, and it would embroil her with him if she questioned him. Julia's temper is hot and her words quick and biting; I will not be the cause of her quarrelling with her brother.

"A young English gentleman is now in Richmond who was in Paris for some time this spring. He brought me a letter of introduction from Mai. Very frankly and innocently he spoke of her as a kinswoman and ward of Captain Hartley's. Do you think he has recognized or intends to recognize Mai as his daughter? Do not think I should object; on the contrary, I feel it is what he should have done when he placed her at school in Montreal. Now explanations will be awkward for Mai's own sake.

"Steenie has returned from her walk. I will finish this letter to-morrow.

. . . . . .

"O my friend! my friend! a messenger has just arrived from 'The Cedars.' Rue has sent for me to bring Steenie home. Their father is mortally wounded.

"'*The Cedars*,' *June* 29.—General Leszinksky may linger some time; that is what the surgeons

say this morning. He has two wounds—one in the right side; the ball has been extracted; another wound in the head. Dr. Wilson tells me that either would be fatal, but you will hear more than I can write from General Carson. How good he was to Rue, and how we all love him! Rue's escort will be sent back by General Lee after this horrible battle is ended. I shall finish this scrawl before they go.

"*June* 30.—General Roane has just arrived with a broken arm and a slight wound in the leg. He had heard that General Leszinksky was dying and he would be brought here. At last! at last! war has come to us in all its terror. General Leszinksky is hardly ever conscious. Rue is with him night and day, except when Dr. Wilson forces her to rest. She does that only that she may keep strength enough to nurse her father. All his talk is of long ago and of my cousin Margaret. Love is stronger than death.

"*July* 7.—The men are to go to Hampton Roads to-day. An aide of General Lee's and one of General Roane's are to go with a flag of truce in charge of Rue's escort. I shall send open letters by the officers, but Bob Stearns

takes this sewed securely in his jacket. I know you will get it. Can you not come to Rue? O Mrs. Carisbrooke! come if possible. I fear this grief will kill her. I pray night and day that her father may recover consciousness. He alone can reason with her.

"Lovingly your friend,

"KATE."

Sometimes better, but never entirely conscious, General Leszinksky lingered through the summer. Mrs. Hartley and Anne Warrington stayed constantly with Rue. Col. Bradnor was at Fortress Monroe, and everything an invalid needed was sent by him to "The Cedars." Medicine and delicacies, even at that date difficult to get in the Confederacy, arrived weekly. So the chain was being forged!

In the early fall Leszinksky died. His suffering made Rue willing to let him go. In the last moment he was perfectly conscious. Rue held Steenie in her arms to kiss him; he motioned for Rue herself, and struggled for speech:

"Kiss me—you, Rue—my blessing—my pride—my darling—promise—"

"Yes, my father, you can trust me. I will

keep my promise. I will prefer Steenie's happiness to mine."

Again through difficult effort at speech: "Not — *that* —promise— you won't—sacrifice— you— Rue—my Margaret's child." And Rue was fatherless in the instant she knew what place she held in his heart.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

"O Navis! referent in mare te novi
Fluctus."

(*Mrs. Hartley to Mrs. Carisbrooke from "The Cedars," October* 25, 1862.)

"MY DEAR MRS. CARISBROOKE: You surely never received the long letter I sent by Bob Stearns. And yet the one short letter Rue had from General Carson, sent through 'the authorities that be in command over us,' mentioned Stearns's arrival. In that letter I begged you to come to 'The Cedars'; and I am very sure the request would have been heeded.

"Rue knew that I had written you to come, and it is evident to me that she is desperately hurt at the failure. She had been so confident of your coming, and she also seemed sure Doctor Carisbrooke would come with you.

"Her father was conscious for a short time before his death. His dying words were all for Rue; but there was a pitiful look of appeal in his face, as though he missed some one in whose care his daughters could be left.

"Rue spoke to me once, a few days after his death, in a manner that proved the bitterness of her disappointment. It was only a short sentence, but the tone and look said even more than the words: 'Could anything have kept my father or me from going to Molly in such an extremity?'

"I will keep this letter until I am sure of a safe messenger; and if my letter was not received *do* write an explanation to Rue. I have never seen so great a change in any one as that lamentable death has made in my cousin. She is moody, imperious, and stubborn, and, in her proud resistance to grief, is disdainful of sympathy. The one sentence I have written you is the only allusion I have ever heard her make to her father since his death. Not a servant is privileged to speak of him; and you know what an affectionate patriarchal relationship existed between master and servants at 'The Cedars.'

"Steenie alone can do as she likes with her sister; and Steenie is being injudiciously spoilt.

"It would have been so much to these girls if you had been here! It would be so much to both if there were over them the wise rule of a firm, kind guardian! They have needed you. They

now need General Carson. I believe their father left them to his guardianship. O Mrs. Carisbrooke! every one that loved Stanislaus Leszinksky must think and care for his daughters.

"General Roane was captured at Sharpsburg, and I hope you will be able to see him before he returns. I hear his exchange has been arranged by General Lee.

"Your brother, Mr. Robert Carisbrooke, was here last week. He insisted that we should all spend the winter in Mobile with his wife. He has taken to Alabama all of my negroes, except a few attached home-servants who are now living in the overseer's house at Belleview. My father's home was burned during the battle on the Chickahominy. I went over there with Mr. Robert Carisbrooke last week. Only stacks of tall chimneys are standing to mark the ruins.

"Two hundred of Rue's negroes are in Alabama on a plantation Mr. Carisbrooke bought for her. He had quite a discussion with her about a gift she insisted on making to the Confederacy. But she had her own way and *gave* seventy-five negro men to the government. She clothes and feeds them, and they are to be freed when the war ends.

"If Rue proves persuadable we will all go to Mobile next month. I hope much from General Roane's influence; and I hope he will bring us tidings of you.

"*November* 9.—General Roane is here, but no especial news or letters from Rosebank. I am glad he saw General Carson. I think the messages he brought from her father's oldest and best-beloved friend have softened Rue. She has, however, decided not to go to Mobile, and for what reason do you suppose? Why, *Steenie* prefers to stay at 'The Cedars.' Not much wonder! She is queen absolute on the place.

"Rue insists that I shall go to Mobile; and as Dr. Wilson's wife has come and will make her home here during the war, it is decided that I leave here next week for Mobile. We stop on the way for a few weeks to see to the welfare of the servants on the new plantation near Selma."

All that fall and winter Steenie was ill, and Rue was roused out of her grief to care for the child. That far it was well for her.

What was ill for them both was the effect upon Steenie. Her sister's devotion, the unrestrained indulgence of every whim, the constant study of

the entire household to anticipate any probable wish, fostered a selfishness which was hidden—as the selfishness of a weak character often is—under an amiable prettiness of manner which made the soft-spoken thanks seem over-payment.

Bob Stearns had strictly obeyed orders. The letter for Mrs. Carisbrooke was never taken from its secure place in his jacket until he saw General Carson, which—owing to a difficulty Carson had with Pope, the newly-appointed commander of the Federal Army of Virginia—was in September at Bowling Green, Kentucky.

The letter was then given to Carson, where it encountered fresh delay. Late in October, after the battle of Perryville, he made a hurried visit to Rosebank and delivered the letter into Mrs. Carisbrooke's hands.

Through Doctor Carisbrooke's brother they had already heard of Leszinksky's death. Mr. Robert Carisbrooke wrote that he had settled the able-bodied field-hands belonging to Mrs. Hartley, the Warringtons, and Rue with his own negroes on lands he had bought in Alabama. This letter, written two months later than Mrs. Hartley's, suggested a possibility that Kate, Rue, and Steenie might winter in Mobile with his wife. He

had taken a large, comfortable house there belonging to absentees who were in Europe, and Mrs. Robert Carisbrooke would be glad to have them with her, for her husband would be compelled to be much of the time upon the newly-settled estate near Selma.

Thus it happened that Carson and the family at Rosebank were entirely ignorant of the fact that Rue was alone that winter at "The Cedars" with only Steenie, Mrs. Wilson, the wife of the surgeon of her father's brigade, and two invalid soldiers from Missouri who could not return to their homes, which were inside of the Federal lines.

Again all outside kindness and help for the household at "The Cedars" came from Colonel Bradnor, who, before and after Pope's disastrous campaign—which, in the opinion of that braggart, "entitled his army to the gratitude of the country," and Jackson's capture of Harper's Ferry—was stationed at Fortress Monroe.

Every flag-of-truce boat that went up the James brought fresh proof of Bradnor's generous thoughtfulness for the orphan daughters of Leszinksky.

Before his regiment left Fortress Monroe to

join Burnside on the Rappahannock he came to City Point, when General Roane, who had been captured at Sharpsburg, was exchanged. With Roane's luggage were several cases Bradnor sent to "The Cedars" which provided comforts and luxuries for the coming winter.

After Burnside's defeat, through influence at Washington (Hartley, converted from belief in secession and State-rights, was now a violent war Democrat), Colonel Bradnor was returned to Fortress Monroe—a position he doubly coveted. It was a pleasant, safe, and comfortable post, and it brought him again within possible line of communication with the heiress whose fortune would more than evenly balance old Simon Hartley's conditional legacy.

Before spring he had succeeded in getting a pass for Rue and Steenie to go through to Canada, and had escorted them to Montreal.

Steenie was placed in the Convent of the Sacred Heart, where Rue was received as a guest until her sister's health should be entirely re-established.

Twice during the summer Bradnor visited them. Before the second visit ended he had certainly won the affection of the younger sister.

Rue's winter quarters were in a small hotel. Mammy Sara was her only attendant and chaperone. She had heard through a chance acquaintance that Mrs. Carisbrooke was with some friends who were living in Paris.

The following summer Rue was again with her sister, and Bradnor's visits to Montreal were repeated.

Steenie brightened in the glow of his attentions, and Rue argued well of the man from the child's liking.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

"The heart beats high
And the blood comes quick; but the lips are still
With awe and wonder.

. . . . . .

Alas for a heart that is left forlorn!
If you live, you must love; if you love, regret.
It were better, perhaps, we had never been born,
Or better, at least, we could well forget."

(*Mrs. Hartley to Mrs. Carisbrooke from Richmond, May* 1, 1863.)

"SINCE the long letter I wrote you from Mobile last winter I have waited patiently for the happy chance that might bring me a letter. Now I hear you are in Paris, which I most heartily regret.

"Rue had gone with Steenie to Canada when I reached here, although I came in March that I might see her. I trust General Carson may go there to see them.

"Captain Hartley's cousin, Colonel Bradnor, got them a pass and escorted them to Montreal. He has been most constant and considerate in attention since he met Rue at the time her father

was wounded. During General Leszinksky's illness, and since, he has never failed to keep them supplied with every possible luxury which an invalid might need. He sends me Rue's short notes telling of Steenie's improvement and her devotion to this new friend—Rue tells me nothing of herself—and then he despatches to her the long letters in which I write her news from her people at 'The Cedars.' She asks no questions and expresses no interest in aught else.

"I know you do not over-much admire Bradnor, but you will like him for his goodness to these dear children.

"Before this you will have seen Julia. Colonel Bradnor sent me a letter from her last month written in February; and Captain Hartley is also in Paris, Julia writes.

"All are there for Mai Hilton's marriage with the Duc de Rameaux. What a fit coronal the strawberry-leaves will make for that exquisite Greek brow!

"I intend to send you all the private and public news I can gather here to bribe you to write me full chapters of this marriage of 'Hagar's' daughter.

"Be sure to tell me of Lucy. Where is she, and how is she?

"But a truce to these questions, which show you how curious I am.

. . . . . .

"I will now give you my news.

"You know what good work the women of Richmond are doing in the hospitals, and that when needs at home press them most hardly. The general scarcity of everything is more felt here than in the country, where there are ways of patching up dinners as well as dresses.

"Charity here means more than giving; it means close, persistent denial of self to have something to give.

"I don't know why it is, but every time I return to Richmond, after even a short absence, life seems more earnest than elsewhere. In Mobile, for instance, there are all sorts of distractions, but here the family life is merged in the national life. Possibly it is the reflection of the heroic lives of the leaders which makes the difference. Possibly it is the result of the stately, dignified manners of these Virginian women, who have been always excellent managers, 'keepers at home,' 'looking well to the ways of their

households.' Now that life broadens, with anxieties shared, privations endured in common, these things affect society.

"Not that Richmond is melodramatic; on the contrary, it is exceedingly simple and natural. Human nature cannot breakfast, dine, and sup with griefs.

"There are moments when the very contrast of ills brings about the broadest farce. People have learned to laugh when they are hurt.

"There is always real pity and sympathy for the soldier in camp and hospital, but a civilian had better not tell his ailings; he will get scant hearing and scanter pity. If a clerk in a department complains of worn shoes and high prices somebody is sure to remark, 'Stonewall Jackson's men are barefoot,' and the poor fellow turns away ashamed of his slight grievance.

"As to the ladies' toilets, they are the queerest possible compound of ancient elegance and recent addition. Print dresses and point lace have come to dwell together in amity.

"You remember how careful Anne has always been of her *bettermost* things? Now she has no other than bettermost, all else being past wear; and so she is a model of the style which prevailed

the last year of the Union. She breakfasted out the other morning in a dress last worn in a Washington crush, looking like a faded fashion-plate.

"Dress is a consideration that begins to make itself felt. Blessed are they who can make or buy homespun! Mr. Davis has had a beautiful suit of jeans given him, and he wears it with evident pride.

"Miss Esmond gave an afternoon tea this week, and there was great fun telling the age and history of different garments.

"Anne Warrington came down late because her dress was too gorgeous for daylight. It was a yellow brocade petticoat, and for overdress a '*fly*' with broad stripes of white and blue with little bouquets of pink roses dotted here and there; the sleeves came to the elbow and finished with a heavy fall of old lace; the waist doubly-pointed. It had belonged to an ancestral great-grandaunt who was a colonial belle. With high-heeled slippers and her hair puffed over an old-fashioned comb, you may imagine how pretty Anne was. She looked so conscious and coquettish that everybody laughed when she began a little speech about her 'utter destitution and the straits to which she was reduced.'

"The fun all goes out of this when the movement of troops brings through the city men ragged and brown, hatless, and, last spring in the wild March weather, shoeless.

"The day after I reached here from Mobile there came through a regiment of the Stonewall brigade; not a dozen men in the command decently shod, and the day a drizzly sleet. The torn, battle-scarred flags were recognized, and women and children crowded the sidewalks. They gathered in knots of twos and threes, with little bursts of exclamation and sympathy. Finally, crowding together in the magnetism of common feeling, they made a rush for the head of the column, and the officers were begged to halt and let the men dine in the houses on each side, where hospitable doors were opened wide. The dinner was accepted, and women scattered to go home in haste and bring their best to the impromptu feast.

"There was a closer gathering of the crowd in the streets while the men were in the houses, and again women hurried about, stopping a moment at different doors, gathering contributions from the scanty supply of many a worn purse.

"In not much longer time than it takes to

write it every shoe-store in the town was cleared of its stock.

"Again about those homes where the men were the street was filled with women waiting till the dinner was finished, with its rare treat of *real* coffee. Then as the men came out they were told to come to a store at the corner and get shoes and socks.

"The bronzed, weather-beaten faces were aglow with thanks. A word was passed down the line, and after a short consultation a young lieutenant came with the answer: 'Ladies, we camped last night on the heights, at Camp Lee, with the new recruits. They are boys mostly, not inured to hardship, and the government has no shoes for them. Give them these. We are Stonewall Jackson's foot-cavalry, and we can fight best barefoot.'

"Who can tell how these women wept? Who will believe such men will fail to win?

"*Coyner's Springs, August* 10, 1863.—Anne and I were a week at the Yellow Sulphur, and then came here to this hottest of all valleys, where society is trying to get cool dancing nightly—'society' being wounded and convalescent soldiers, wives and daughters of officers

at the front, and semi-detached Senators and Congressmen with no visible constituency, for the blue-coats hold their precincts. We take rides in the country and find the people suffering great hardships, but bearing their ills bravely and patiently.

"Who will be found worthy to write the history of these Virginian women?

"Up the mountains one morning we stumbled over a family living in a double log-house with tumbled-down outhouses. There were three women and seven children, the gathered remnants of four families whose homes had been broken up near Fredericksburg. They were living on corn-bread and the milk of two cows, exchanging their butter for salt. Only the proceeds of a 'truck-patch' to depend on for the coming winter. No labor but their own and the feeble assistance, which was likely to grow into an encumbrance, of one old negro and his bent, rheumatic wife who had followed their broken fortunes.

"These were cultivated, gently nurtured women; two of them widows, made so by the war. The third had her husband, and the widows had two sons with Lee. To see these women work-

ing, and trying to feed the children and raise a little cotton ('a little cotton,' as they said, 'to make socks and shirts for our soldiers'), in faded, patched, worn dresses, with sunburned faces and roughened hands, was to me the most touching sight I have seen since the beginning of the war. What a mere nothing seemed all we could do compared to this unselfish, simple living through a life of toil, labor, and privation, without talking of sacrifice!

"How heartless seemed the dancers that night, how stupid the jokes of the overfed Senator.

"I sat in the wide piazza, self-condemned, convicted of wasted purpose, ready to be cross with any one who smiled, when there hobbled up a wounded captain of the Louisiana zouaves. Here was some one to be sorry for and sorry with. That tone fitted into the stormy feeling of the hour.

"How variable is human nature! A few minutes later the circle of listeners had widened and we were laughing heartily at the captain's story of the kid-gloved, patent-leather-footed zouaves' revolt from work in the trenches at Pensacola during the first summer of the war; and

how Bragg set their servants to digging and 'bucked' them into respect for discipline. And the wind-up—'he spoilt us as dandies, but he made soldiers of us'—brought thought back to the war again. We are never permitted to forget that long.

"*Augusta, Ga., September* 20, 1863.—We arrived here yesterday, the first stop since leaving Danville.

"This town seems an oasis of rest. I do not think they altogether realize the constant storm of battle in Virginia and Tennessee.

"In no other place have I seen so many civilians in the street.

"Georgia has suffered less than any of the other States.

"Augusta is the market for a comparatively rich agricultural country. It is beyond raids and has unbroken railroad connection with the South and East; consequently it is a desirable home for the families of the Kentucky soldiers either with Lee or Bragg, so Kentuckians congregate here.

"For the poorer refugees, like our friends 'up the mountain,' it is a haven beyond their means, the cost of coming, and the need of money to

live on, is too great. Poverty ties them to the soil of Virginia. But the Kentucky refugees are differently placed; they are comparatively rich, and the increased value of gold makes it cheap to live here if you have a gold basis.

"We had supper last evening with a family where we had all the luxuries that have grown into luxuries since the war.

"The house, up on the sand-hills, was large and airy. Our hostess showed us with pride a bed-room furnished with dry-goods boxes, showily draped with furniture print—altogether a pretty imitation of French hangings. She evidently expected compliment for her simplicity and economy. *We* were thinking of the waste of calico, *the 'little patch of cotton' to make 'shirts and socks for our soldiers,'* and the faded dresses of those Virginian gentlewomen.

"However, patriotism is not a synonym for poverty, and this lady proved her sincerity by being willing to suffer affliction (meaning dry-goods boxes) with the people of God for a season, provided the 'wind was tempered' to the thoroughbred 'shorn' of its cashmere fleece.

"Anything is better than the apathy of these Georgians. This assuredly does not apply to the

gallant soldiers who are in the Georgia regiments, but to the rich substitute-buyers—and their name is legion. Longstreet's corps brought away from Virginia when the need seems greatest there; Breckenridge and his homeless Kentuckians at the front, stubbornly opposing Rosecrans's advance; while here men sit in the shade and coolly discuss the chance of defeat!

"Our host has just come in with despatches: fighting near Chattanooga; Bragg's entire army engaged. Thank God that Longstreet is there with a corps of the Virginian army!

"*September* 22, 1863.—Another telegram brings news of victory. Rosecrans crushed and beaten back. All that are left of Longstreet's veterans are camped on the ground they have won. O my Virginians! my Virginians!

"*Selma, Ala., September* 24, 1863.—Tom Clay is dead! Poor boy! he will come no more in the cool, dewy twilight to talk of home and his far-away sweetheart. How she will grieve as the days go by and there are no more letters! The light of many a life goes out with 'no more letters.'"

CHAPTER XXXV.

"The catastrophe is a nuptial."

(*Mrs. Carisbrooke to Mrs. Hartley from Paris, June* 20, 1863.)

"'AN angel is like you, Kate, and you are like an angel.' You give good gifts without mean or miserly reckoning. Your letters have all come to me, but where mine have gone only our meddlesome Paul Prys can tell; yet you will believe that I have written you often and full measure. Since the one sent from Canada by that faithful Kentucky courier none, it seems, have reached you.

"But I have good hope of this, and I shall not send it by way of Fortress Monroe or to your Cousin Bradnor's care. One L. Quintius Curtius—not of Rome but of rebeldom; one we both have known in better days, my dear—has promised it safe conduct. If he is but half so good a postal clerk as he is diplomatist, then I am sure my lady's hand will touch and my lady's eyes will read these lines.

"You can trust Bradnor if you like, but I will none of him. Although the dandy has sent me the first broken half of your letter safely and expeditiously, I hope part second is already *en route*. The fact of that letter's arrival proves it was never submitted to official inspection. Neither Stanton nor any creature made in his likeness would have passed so rebellious a document.

"What you write me of Rue grieves me. That a daughter of Stanislaus Leszinksky and Margaret Cartaret should suspect our want of faith or friendship denotes a morbid distrust of all humankind.

"Rue's intensity must border on insanity, or else her griefs have twisted her all awry.

"Had your letter come to me in time I would have humbled myself in the dust and begged a pass of Stanton. Had that failed I think 'Redhead' would have passed me through the lines at the cost of his commission. But when the letter did at last reach me we all thought it too late for me to go to 'The Cedars,' and Robert's letter clinched the thought. If Steenie were older and had lacked faith in me I would not have been astonished. But Rue?—why, I would as

soon have supposed Molly could be suspicious of the constancy of my affection for her! It has so hurt me that I have most bunglingly written her a letter of explanation – an explanation so ill made that she may find in it fresh cause of offence; and, in fact, my experience of life proves that words of excuse or apology never can cement broken faiths or friendships. There is no harder task than the dislodgment of suspicion. Its admittance beneath the roof of thought is proof of change in the host that harbors it.

"If my letter fails to bring Rue to wiser and better thinking, I shall either go to her when I return home or send an ambassador. We cannot quarrel with 'King Stan's' daughter nor permit her to believe evil things of us.

"This far the worst of it is, it has made Bradnor's attention welcome. Such a thing as a well-principled coxcomb may be possible, but I do not think Captain Hartley's relative is a specimen I should admit as that possibility. I look upon it as a great misfortune that he was Rue's helper when her father's sufferings made help needful. Julia has told me the condition attached to the fortune Simon Hartley left the fellow. Of course he is looking for an heiress with the re-

quisite amount. Rue's estate so largely exceeds the amount that his cupidity is doubly on the alert. He is a handsome animal, but, I confess it, I detest him. Not that I think his good looks would win Rue—I know her too well to believe that; but I know her so well that I know she will never forget or refuse payment for the kindness to her father. My only trust for her defence against such misplaced gratitude is in 'Red-head.'

"I think my beloved and most charmingly amiable son-in-law would break the dandy's neck were there no other method of breaking the match—which at last may be only 'a thing of imagination all compact.'

"To get rid of the subject I shall tell you news of the woman the dandy should marry. She is a feminine representative of the same species. I retract that, and but for blotting this letter would erase it. Mai Hilton is a heartless coquette, but in brains she is infinitely the superior of her distant cousin. (He is her cousin.) If I believed, my fair Katherine, that you had left anywhere about you a solitary particle of esteem or regard for the man whose wife you are so ill-advised as to permit yourself to be considered, I would write

nothing of Captain Hartley's visit here to his daughter or of his acknowledgment of her as his daughter, which he has made.

"I had better begin at the beginning and tell you all I know.

"I sailed from New York in February—not in March, as you supposed. My rebellious neighbors who used to live near me on 'the hill' have set up their household gods here in Paris—meaning ill-executed pictures of Lee and Jackson. They were constantly writing me invitations to visit them and see the shrine before which they burn waxen candles.

"I was doing no particular good at home. In fact, Carisbrooke gently hinted that I was busy the other way.

"I cannot truthfully say Carisbrooke was brutal, or even rude, in the manner of his suggestion. But he did manage to let me understand that the admirable frankness and wisdom with which I expressed my opinion of the conduct of the war was getting to be a damper upon the President. Close observers noticed that it was suppressing his anecdotal lore.

"Even in the flush of such victories as those of *Banks* and SCHENCK Mr. Lincoln would break

down in his second reminiscence. To the awe and consternation of the cabinet, he would suddenly stop after the familiar phrase, 'That reminds of a little story,' and go off on some serious tack quite foreign to the subject. You see *I* was the serious tack.

"Then, too, Stanton's sweet, babe-like sleep was broken—

> 'Sore labor's bath ;
> Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,'

was denied him, all a-cause of one woman.

" Yet I do not know that these particular national calamities would either have kept me silent or forced me to flee the country.

"But, like all great orators, Carisbrooke had reserved his climax. The peroration which brought me to Paris was that I was 'the insurmountable obstacle which had delayed "Red-head's" promotion.'

"To propitiate the 'Infernal Gods'—observe the capitals and the quotation-marks, and you will know that I am classical, not profane—I undertook this pilgrimage.

"Carisbrooke came with me to New York; from thence Lucy was my companion and atten-

dant, which is a partial answer to your inquiry. She is perfectly rational now, but her health is delicate ; these two conditions made her coming with me advisable and induced Carisbrooke to give his consent. Privately she begged me to bring her. She knew Mai was here, and promised to be reasonable and discreet. Trusting to her promise, I brought her.

"Thus far she has kept her promise under peculiarly trying circumstances.

"We were both quite sea-sick, so I rested a week in London.

"Some English people we had entertained at Rosebank made it very pleasant for me. You are so joined to your idols that you will be glad to hear they were 'Southern sympathizers.' So it happened at a swell dinner they gave I met most of the notable rebels then in London: the Masons, of course, and with them the noble envoy —refused at St. Petersburg—who sends you this. I heard that night a very pretty compliment to him which I think will please you.

"A bright woman, who belongs to a family distinguished as *diplomats*, said, as L. Quintius Curtius moved away from the little group: 'That young man is wonderfully clever. He is

the brightest diplomatist I have ever met from America. He understands what the other men you have sent here have never learned—the value of women as allies, and that they have a certain social influence in politics which is especially effectual in influencing the public reception of new questions. He is free from the pettiness of masculine vanity which would either underrate or be indifferent to that influence. If he was the senior and leader of the commissioners I think he would win the recognition they ask.'

"The day after this dinner I left London on the tidal train for Paris. I had taken a first-class ticket for Lucy, that I might have her with me. We were alone in the railway carriage, and the guard was about to lock the door, when I heard some one say, 'Mrs. Carisbrooke.' As I looked around our 'envoy' was asking permission to enter with a friend. It was given on the instant, and as number one took the place opposite to me I saw that number two was Captain Hartley. The greeting and the perfunctory inquiries were exceedingly awkward, for he had recognized Lucy, who was in the next seat to mine. Fortunately, the 'envoy' was in one of his brilliantly talkative moods, and I was only too willing to listen

without interruption, except when it was needful to touch a new key that there might be no stop. On the packet we saw nothing of Captain Hartley, nor did we from Calais to Paris. His companion reported him in a smoking-carriage.

"Thus the trial of Lucy's 'reasonable' and 'discreet' promise was made before we reached Paris. I could see she was of an ashen color; further than that she gave no evidence of remembrance or recognition.

"I was so sure the meeting with Hartley would prevent my seeing Mai that I was surprised beyond measure when, two days after I was settled in the little apartment taken for me by my friends, the *concierge* came up with a card: 'The lady was waiting in her carriage to hear if I was disengaged and would receive her.' The card was engraved 'Miss Hartley-Hilton.'

"I bade the man show the lady up.

"The second-sight of the Scotch wizard is a mere nothing to the clairvoyance of a mother. Lucy could not understand what had been said, and she had not seen the card; but, with a rapid glance at the trembling figure leaning against the mantelpiece, I comprehended her look of expectancy.

"Affecting a confidence I was far from feeling, I bade her wait in my room, saying: 'If you are sure of yourself, sure you will not come where Mai can see you, you may leave the door ajar so you can both see and hear.' She kissed my hand with a most grateful look of thanks, which also was a look of promise.

"'Miss Hartley-Hilton' was announced in such fashion that the name was not recognizable.

"My dear Kate! we all always thought her beautiful. Well, the bud was nothing to the flower. All the visions of beautiful women that I have had, in and out of the flesh, were as nothing to this goddess. How well the Parisians have named her!

"She gave me no time for mere perfunctory civilities. A cannon-ball sent by your famous young Pelham could not have more plumply fallen into the middle of things.

"'My father told me that you were here, Mrs. Carisbrooke. He urged the fact as a reason for my leaving Paris immediately—we are going to Rome for Easter—but the reason he gave for avoidance is the reason that brought me here. The woman Lucy—my mother—is with you?'

"'Yes, she is with me.'

"'Why did she come? Or rather, why did you bring her? Was it to see me, to make any claim upon me? Did you know that I was about to be married to the Duc de Rameaux?'

"'Yes, I knew it.'

"'Then that is why you brought her?'

"'Yes, that she might see you married.'

"'I know. You are Mrs. Hartley's friend. You wish to punish me for my father's recognition of me as his daughter. That is why you brought the woman, my mother—she is my mother; I do not and shall not deny that fact. I came to ask what she and you expect from me. What does she demand?'

"'She demands from you—nothing. It is what you have given her since you knew you had a mother living. Your father has given her less and more: when her youth was prematurely withered and her beauty had faded he took you from her and gave her another master.'

"'Did he not free her?'

"'Yes, after she had escaped and disgrace threatened him.'

"'He says that he believed she was dead.'

"'The wish was father to the thought.'

"'If she asks nothing, expects nothing, why is she here, and what interest has she in my marriage?'

"'She has the heart of a mother, the devotion of a mother. Neglected, denied, despised, twice driven to insanity, the first effort of recovered reason, the first question that frames itself to her returning sense, is for her child. She is content to live outside of your life, but the very breath of life to her is assurance of your safety, of your happiness. She only wished to look upon the face of her child, to see the husband into whose hands her child's happiness is to be trusted. She does not ask or wish you to look upon her. She demands neither love nor recognition. And for her I demand nothing, except that at a safe distance from your splendor, in some retired corner where her presence may not be noticed, she shall see you married. She is so single-thoughted in her devotion to you that your marriage is everything to her. She has been a slave, but she is a loving woman. Her faults came from poison in the blood, from the degradation of one race and the sin of another. Her first and only wish in life is to see her daughter lifted above danger of temptation. To her

your marriage seems a very ark of safety. Now you know her demands. I can assure you that in no way will she compromise your future. In my household she is loved and respected. Her home is with us. In the last interview she had with you, the last she ever will have, she mutely promised to make no claim to any place in your life or your affection. She has kept and she will keep the promise. But when I see her in pain through the yearning desire of a mother to look upon the child she carried next her heart, I will bring her where, unknown to your world, she may look upon your face.'

"'Mrs. Carisbrooke, do you think I do not pity her? Ah! you do not know that through this marriage I repay Captain Hartley what she has suffered. Because of this alliance, which reflects a certain distinction upon the son of a petty tradesman, heir of Simon Hartley the miser, Captain Hartley has given me the right to bear his name and will pay the *dot* a ducal house requires. I assure you it is no slight sacrifice he makes. He has had losses in the last few years, and I have never measured or restricted my expenditures since I knew what debt I owed him through my mother. Ah! madame, he has paid

dearly for what I learned at Rosebank. And now it takes the greater part of his fortune to balance my tainted blood against the honors, and dignities, and virtues of the Duc de Rameaux.'

"I can tell you the words, Kate, but I cannot show you the scorn that flashed from the beautiful violet eyes. I had heard a noise from my bed-room and I was anxious to end the interview. Miss Hartley-Hilton ended it by saying:

"'If your friend Mrs. Hartley—she was always kind to me, and I am grateful—wishes, she can easily prove the story false which Captain Hartley told at the legation here when the marriage settlements were drawn. He said that he had been secretly married to my mother, who died at my birth. The Duc de Rameaux has heard the truth; I told it to him. He knows the stain and accepts it with me—and a *dot*. I will send you cards for yourself and your *friend* to see me married. Good-morning.' And she was gone.

"She has Hartley eyes, but she has the daring courage of her grandfather, the gambler. She plays her stakes as recklessly and is willing to stand the hazard of the die. When she left me I was in doubt which most to applaud, her beauty and grace or her rash, determined spirit. But

for all that I thanked the gods no one I loved was in the position of the Duc de Rameaux.

"The next day I heard that Mrs. Cartaret and the Hartleys had gone to Rome. The Duc de Rameaux followed them.

"The week after Easter I received cards (one left blank) for the marriage ceremony, which was to be celebrated at the American Chapel. I took Lucy to a quiet corner in the gallery. Kneeling there, she watched her child. The tears that fell from those soft, brooding eyes, and which rolled unheeded over the thin, wasted face, mutely pleaded for forgiveness of her sin and for the happiness of her child. That sad look of apprehension which used to be ever present in her countenance has gone. The long-drawn sighs that come at regular intervals from the quiet corner in which she chooses to work are all that tell of past griefs.

"The morning after the marriage the Duc and Duchesse de Rameaux left for their château in Touraine.

"Next week we go to Switzerland with our friends, and later to the English lakes. I will write you again when we get to London, where I hope to find letters from you."

(*Mrs. Hartley to Mrs. Carisbrooke from the plantation near Selma, October 7, 1863.*)

"My dear Mrs. Carisbrooke: At last a letter from you. It followed me from Richmond, passed me *en route*, went on to Mobile, and yesterday your brother Robert brought it back here.

"Thanks for your compliance with my wish. This despatch of yours is a news-letter. But in one way it will not have the effect you anticipate.

"I will never carry my troubles into a divorce court. And if Captain Hartley wishes to I do not think he can find cause for divorce. The bonds of relationship often grow painful, but we do not break them for that. We simply endure such ills as we best may. If I were dying of a cancer I should not tear away the coverings to show it to all the world. I shall certainly never uncover to the multitude my private grief. I knew what your letter meant, for I have heard you talk all this *at* me—never unkindly, but because of the loving-kindness of your motive it has always touched me nearly. Now I beg as a favor that it may rest, silenced by your regards for my—call them, if you like—prejudices.

"I am glad Mai was recognized by her father. It is the most manly and human thing I have ever known of him. I could not make that a cause of quarrel, had I wanted one.

"I am sincerely glad of Lucy's improvement. She has been a sore spot in my conscience for years. If there is ever anything that I may be permitted to do for her, the doing it will be a pleasure and a favor to me. Had I been gentler in speech and temper that first summer of my stay at Oakhill, if anger had not blinded all sense of justice, that poor mother's life might not have been altogether one of suffering.

"It is difficult for Sarah to pity Hagar, to think of her as a victim.

"I am heartily glad of Mai's good-fortune—if it is good-fortune. What do you know or hear of the man she has married?

"I have news to tell that you will be sorry to hear. With your letter yesterday Mr. Robert Carisbrooke brought me others. One was from Rue and one from Colonel Bradnor. Each announced their engagement to the other, and both the letters were short, stiff, and ceremonious.

"O Mrs. Carisbrooke! what can we do? I am sure there will be no love in this marriage. I

pray something may happen to break it. Surely, surely Stanislaus Leszinksky's daughter will be saved from such misery!

"The only loophole of escape that I see is that it is to be a long engagement. They are 'not to be married until Steenie comes of age.' Thank Heaven for that!

"General Roane and two of his staff have just arrived. They are on their way to the trans-Mississippi department. General Roane is to join Sterling Price. We will not see him again until the war ends. And as yet who can prophesy when that will be?

"But I must say good-by. General Roane will take this and the longer letter which I have kept waiting opportunity, and send them through Memphis. He tells me his old friend General Forrest has a safe private mail route through the city. Always yours,

"KATE."

(*Mrs. Carisbrooke to Mrs. Hartley from Rosebank, April* 3, 1864.)

"MY DEAR KATE: General Forrest's mail route was safe but very slow. I do not know how he managed it, but the letter came to Cincinnati by

private hands just after Forrest's fight at Okalona, where, in the classic language of *our* great leader of a 'movable column,' 'half our cavalry went to h— and half to Memphis.'

"But I dare not say another such word. I have promised Carson—who is now here for a day, and who says he will see this sent to you by a quicker post than yours—to give no news that can in any way be construed as military information. And even that pious hint *as to the direction taken by the Federal cavalry* might give 'aid and comfort to the enemy,' which means *you*, my dear. Being thus basely restricted in my endeavor to write history, I will tell you all the scandal I know. (If it was not for the military restriction I could tell things that would 'murder sleep' and make a 'fretful porcupine' of you. What a pity I am bound to silence!) Not being free to tell military news (or scandal), I shall go out of the country for my items.

"Rue answered my 'explanation,' but in a very high and mighty way, which was not encouraging to fresh epistolary effort. Being a resolute, persistent woman, I would not give it up. Two weeks after I returned from abroad, which was in January, I faced the arctic tempe-

rature of Montreal to see her majesty. But her royal courtesy was as cold as the climate. Not being amiable beyond measure, I made one or two observations that had probably better have been left unsaid. I had heard through Mrs. Cartaret of the Bradnor engagement, and I was witless enough to characterize him as a fool and a fortune-hunter, which was in no sense wise in me. Rue is not altogether above the womanly weakness of counting on her own attractions, and her craze is devotion where she is, or feels she ought to be, attached.

"Thus at double points I angered her, and the longer I kept at it the less I bettered it. The upshot was, I started home the next day with a very positive impression that things were as badly muddled and as much out of joint as I could get them. Then Molly wrote Rue a most peace-provoking letter. She had the grace to answer Molly's civilly. 'Red-head' and Molly are going to Montreal as soon as 'Red-head' can be spared—but this touches the forbidden. 'Red-head' is the very cream and color of military intelligence.

"Before I am wrecked let me try another tack.

"Molly has a daughter, born in the blustering

month of March. And her name is Margaret Leszinksky, at which I am pleased, although it is a decided snub to my lovely name, of which I am daily growing more enamored, as Virginia—there I go again! That tack was a failure.

"This time I shall get out of the country, and keep out.

"The beautiful young Duchesse de Rameaux has not only been duly presented to the imperial majesties, but she has a place at court. That far all sounds like joyful-ringing marriage-bells, but sinister undertones come over the sea. The duc lost heavily last summer on the turf, and baccarat did not lighten his losses. Neither did a certain actress who wears ducal diamonds. Rumor says the *dot* which the duchesse brought him has been squandered, and that his generous and amiable father-in-law was 'done' in the transaction. The estates upon which old Simon Hartley's dollars were supposed to be secured have already upon them two generations of mortgages.

"It seems the only person this disturbs is Captain Hartley. The young duchesse neither moans nor retrenches. Her wardrobe is the glory of Worth and the marvel and the admi-

ration of Paris. Some one is pinched! Carisbrooke heard accidentally that Hartley had telegraphed to order the sale of certain stock; and when his broker delayed, and explained that it would be a great loss, the order was made peremptory. The old miser's millions are sliding the way millions are said to do when the majesty from the bottomless pit has gathered them.

"The mills go on grinding slowly. Hartley may be ruined through his love for Lucy's daughter. I would not have believed his affection would ever have led him to self-sacrifice.

"Sometimes, when I remember what Mai said to me of the price her marriage would cost her father, I fancy she intended his ruin. She said she would 'repay her mother's debt.'

"Larry Hoyt's settlement of such a debt, had he promised settlement, would have been quick and sure, but frankly and openly risked. I fear the gambler's blood has been corrupted by the Hartley strain; or it may be the outcome of some Voudoo witch who worked her evil will through hidden and deadly mysteries ages ago where the Nile spring bubbles into life.

"What a puzzling psychological study can be drawn out of a blood-puddle!

"If I were a psychomancist, to define the beautiful duchesse I would call up the Voudoo witch. I am sure the witch is in the majority. She counts for more than the gambler.

"The Hartley part goes for naught. It is only dirt. But then that conclusion sets one off on a new search. Julia has loyal and true and honest qualities. Pshaw! Julia is the reproduction of some remote accident. Like Mai, she is the mystic product of past ages.

"There must be a subtle, transmissible essence in blood that, under certain conjunctions, is procreative of qualities. Why else should it flow smoothly for generations and then suddenly develop a new species?

"Here are three examples ready for your study:

"No. 1. RUE—*Homerically heroic, princely in faults—an evident skip from the middle ages.*

"No. 2. JULIA—*A reproduction of germs of intelligence and feeling which were buried in the dirt beneath the Hartley animalism.*

"No. 3. MAI—*A goddess. Evolved from a witch, has she a human soul?*

"If your head aches with the reading, what

do you suppose I have suffered while giving birth to these children of an addled brain?

"April as it is, we still have fires. Lucy is sitting close beside mine, mending Carisbrooke's favorite coat.

"I would wager she is thinking of her daughter; what a true, womanly poor woman she is! It is the *fact*, not the grandeur, of her daughter's marriage that touches her. Lucy must have had some blind, indefinable fear that Mai's fate might resemble her own. Release from that fear has brought her peace. Sometimes at her work—which she seems to hold to as a safeguard to reason—I hear her softly singing that sweet old hymn, 'Abide with me.' I remember it was a favorite with Margaret Leszinksky.

"I know now where the duchesse got that wonderful musical intuition and clear, bird-like voice.

"I think Lucy entirely cured; but Carisbrooke looks grave when I ask his opinion, and then hopes that 'no sudden shock will disturb the balance.'

"If there is bad news from Mai I must keep it from Lucy. And that will be difficult. She is

greatly changed from the old apathetic manner. She is acutely sensitive to mention of Mai—sensitive and watchful. I think she catches and understands every allusion that is made. She is still devoted to Molly, and even more devoted to Molly's children, but she has lost the old insane belief in her ownership of all children who are ill.

"I know now where she spent the long months when she left us. She was in the country near New York with the O'Dowds, occasionally going to Philadelphia—watching the house where her child lived for a chance view of her lost treasure. That was why she saved money. Now that her natural characteristics appear, she is the most generous person I have ever known. The little income your cousin Margaret settled upon her, and all her earnings, are given to the poor. Her services are free to all she can aid with service. She was constantly sitting up with poor invalids here on the hill and in the city, until Carisbrooke insisted that she should not do so without his permission. And now she importunes him until he is sometimes worried into consent.

"I have told all the news except that which is

'contraband'; and of course the forbidden is what I most want to say.

"But you can write full letters. And I trust in you to hear from our—from the unrepentant rebels."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

"Fierce and clear is the scabbard's ring,
With the sharp sword for guest;
But the whirl of the downward swing
Of that blue blade is best.

"And the tramp of a thousand steeds
In thunder and cloud,
When the earth is shaken and bleeds,
Maketh a man's heart proud—

"More proud than words ever said
Or songs ever sung!
And proudest the hearts, fever-fed,
Of the brave and the young."

(*Mrs. Hartley to Mrs. Carisbrooke from Mobile, February*, 1865.)

"MY DEAR MRS. CARISBROOKE: No letters from you since one written last April which General Carson sent through by an officer who was exchanged. I wrote you in May and sent the letter to Memphis. I fear you did not get it. But I am writing this in broken bits and will send it when occasion favors me. Mrs. Robert Carisbrooke has gone to Selma, or rather to the plantation, and I am staying with my old

friend and schoolmate, Sue Burton, who married a classmate of Dr. Carisbrooke's. I am perfectly at home in this hospitable house, and delighted to escape our chilly, rainy Virginia spring.

"*February* 10.—What a day and what a climate!

"'Soft o'er beds of violets zephyr steals.'

I have sat at my work all the morning with windows and doors wide open.

"This afternoon numberless callers and interruptions. At six a drive down the bay with three Mobile ladies.

"We looked across the water to where the Yankee ships were anchored, while listening to a story that proved the value of a bad reputation. A short time since a party of Yankees from a gunboat landed at a plantation at the very time the mistress (who resides in Mobile on account of their proximity) was at home getting supplies to take back to the city. She resisted as far as words would go; they insisted without words; and the transfer of edibles from her wagon to their boat was quickly made. Having nothing left but temper, she threw it at them in taunts:

"'Why do you not fight our men? Come to Mobile and take the city. You have been three years anchored in the bay, and this is your first conquest.'

"'Yes, madam,' said the blue-coat very gravely. 'You are perfectly right in your reckoning of time; could not have done it better myself—just three years and some days over. All that time Mobile has been full of gold-laced rebels [a different breed from the ragged Virginians], and it has been the principal business of you ladies utterly to spoil them as soldiers. It is a notorious fact that the rebel government is constantly forced to change the troops there, but they can't do it fast enough to keep up the *morale*. When they go back Bragg swears, and Lee puts them in front of the Stonewall brigade with bayonet points in their suspender-crossings. Yes, madam, you are right: over three years have passed, and we would rather not have Mobile. Keep your Capua.'

"We all laugh rather ruefully, and fear there is a little justice in this hit.

"Going home, we stopped at Colonel Forsyth's to ask the news from Virginia. News of the saddest—Lee begging for recruits and provisions;

none and nothing to send him. To-morrow night a meeting here to try what can be done.

"*March*, 1865.—I don't believe Mobile can help being gay and bright, no matter what current of grief sweeps through the national life. This is partly climatic. With such air, pure, soft, violet-odored, life brightens into happy bits. Naples laughs though Vesuvius threatens. And Mobile is a lesser Naples, lazzaroni and all. If you doubt it come and go down to the shore and count the turbaned heads that sleep in the sun as they wait for those lazy fishermen

"'Who rock in their boats on the bay.'

"There is surely a Congress of Beauty in Mobile this winter: Mobilians of every type, some fair as Helen and as—s-t-o-p i-t; no scandal, if you please; others (than Helen) sweet, pure, and grandly beautiful; brunettes that outflash Mohammed's houris; blondes fit to wait on the heroes in Valhalla; some who would match your Parisian 'goddess.' I will not write names, but I will say that this winter I lived in the house with Aphrodite—not that no-*saint* who floated out of the sea-foam, but a product of Kentucky. Even 'Macaria' raved of her beauty in five-syllabled

dithyrambics. Under the rose I would say that Aphrodite is not a wise goddess—but then a woman so magnificently beautiful does enough for her race when she lets them look at her.

"*April* 8, 1865.—There are the most unexpected *rencontres* here. Society seems a magician's table, where you do not know what may chance next. You have an engagement to ride in the morning with a friend; he comes with 'Care on the crupper' to make his excuses—he is going to the front with despatches. You are to dine with another; a messenger comes to say the family have gone to the plantation, for a Yankee raid has just swept through and they must know how the children, left with servants, have fared. You are invited to a *quiet* tea with a third; six to one you go in your second-best dress (you only have two) and meet all the people of your circle in their uniform and well-worn evening costume.

"Yesterday the ladies of the household were in the parlor receiving Albert G—— and his bride (people still give and are given in marriage, though the wedding march is thrilled through with cannon-shot), when Colonel Shirley, my old neighbor at Belleview, was announced—in town for the day, on his way to Price's command,

which confronts Banks on the Red River. Another ring at the door: Judge W——, of Memphis, whom the fate of war has brought here. His oldest son was killed in the first year of the war; the youngest, a mere lad, has taken his dead brother's place. Destiny's kaleidoscope shakes father and son together in our drawing-room.

"Society has quieted into a daily expectancy; there is no possibility of settling to anything. We can only wait. What feasts are made are to feed hungry soldiers, though there are shadowy spectres at every banquet 'that push us from our stools.'

"To-day there is constant fighting over the bay at Blakely and Spanish Fort. General Liddell is in command at Blakely; with him the brave remnant of a Missouri brigade just exchanged from a Yankee prison in time to fight in this hopeless defence.

"Mobile's mothers' darlings are there, too, playing soldier in earnest: nine hundred of the Mobile cadets, boys from fourteen to seventeen—'old enough,' as their boy leader said, 'to die for the country'! There, too, are the Home Guard—men from forty-five to sixty-five.

"At Spanish Fort, Gibson, with eight hundred men and the Washington artillery, resists the pressure of Canby's column, which is seventy-five thousand strong and has thirty-six batteries in place and three gunboats in the offing. Thermopylæ had not greater odds!

"This unrest drives to extremes, so Mrs. Benedict and I have volunteered to go to-night with the hospital-boat which takes supplies and brings back the wounded.

"*April* 9.—At nine o'clock last night we left the wharf—three gentlemen, two ladies, and the ship's crew. At ten we reached Blakely. There we landed supplies; then our shadowy ship crept silently down the river past the enemy's batteries, landing without accident under the guns of Spanish Fort.

"Then came the danger. The Federals were making a night attack. Shrieking shells burst above us into shattered lights, hot shot crossed the sky like blazing meteors — from every point of the compass there speeded lightning-flashes of flame. From the batteries around those doomed earthworks, and from down the bay where the sullen gunboats belched forth fire and shot, there were sheets of light. The enemy

had caught sight of our sails and through the cordage their balls came thick and fast.

"All this time men were busy bringing the wounded on board and taking provisions ashore.

"Their sharpshooters got our range, and now to all that infernal clatter was added the quick, rain-like pattering of minie-bullets on the deck. Men were killed bringing on the wounded; wounded men were killed as they were brought aboard.

"Another danger was added—General Gibson had decided to evacuate the place. For weeks they had held it through a constant storm of battle. These worn-out men could do no more; but the ammunition, so scarce and so precious, must be saved, so it was piled on the deck between rows of wounded men. Let one shot strike there and the ship and its living freight must go down. But—

> "'Stormed at by shot and shell,
> . . . . . .
> Out of the gates of death,
> Out of the mouth of hell,'

we safely passed the river-batteries.

"At Blakely we stopped and gathered fresh swaths of the battle harvest—more wounded and

one dead boy. Men were buried where they fell, but the boy must be sent to his waiting mother.

"We landed at Mobile in the bright April morning, and there on the wharf the mothers of the cadets were waiting for news. They all pressed forward as the corpse was brought off, to see whose was the loss. Only fifteen years old, shot through the forehead, the blue eyes open, and the yellow hair dabbled in blood! The only son of a poor Scotch widow—that 'fair-haired laddie.' His father was killed at Vicksburg. The mother's soul seemed to go from her in a low, sad wail as she clasped her dead boy in her arms.

"In the afternoon the silence across the bay told us that Blakely was taken. A boat brought over the few who escaped, and the story was told how men were shot down after the surrender. Then, too, we heard how, in the moment of a successful escape, Cockerell was told how his men were being murdered, and from the gunboat which he had reached in safety he swam back to stop the massacre or share the fate of his comrades.

"I have tried to picture this semi-military life, its joys, its sorrows; how it laughed in the sun-

shine, how the storm broke it to fragments. And yet, unless you had lived through it all, you would not know what treasure lies buried beneath its ruins.

"*April* 13.—Yesterday Mobile surrendered to the foe. They tell us Lee has surrendered. I do not believe them. The British consul promised to send you this letter. When I can I shall go to Virginia. To think what we have all suffered in vain!"

BOOK THIRD.

PART SECOND.

"IPSO JURE."

"For I tell you the great baize will soon fall down. Have I had any secrets from you all through the piece? I tell you the house will be empty and you will be in the cold air. When the boxes have got their nightgowns on, and you are all gone, and I have turned off the gas and am in the empty theatre alone in the darkness, I promise you I shall not be merry."—THACKERAY.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

"We for the year to come may take
Our temper from to-day."

JUDGE CARTARET'S management of "the great Cartaret estate" during Margaret's minority; his judicious investment of its yearly revenues in lands in and near Chicago and St. Louis, followed as it was by Rue's long minority; and Mr. Robert Carisbrooke's prudent improvement of these lots and lands, had more

than quadrupled the sum total before the beginning of the civil war.

Bradnor, who was disposed to watch his interests carefully, had gone directly to "The Cedars" as soon as the Federal forces invested Richmond. Although he had resigned his command at the time of his engagement to Rue, he had sufficient interest at headquarters to get a guard detailed from the brigade to which he had belonged, and consequently the only loss the estate had suffered was in its available working force; outside of the lands surrounding the house the plantation was an immense pasture-field.

Late in the fall of 1865 Rue and Steenie returned from Canada. All of the "Mason negroes" except Solomon—who was rapidly laying the foundation for his later rise to political importance in North Carolina—and several families of the Cartaret people were at "The Cedars" when the sisters returned.

According to the provision of her grandfather's will, Rue, having attained her majority, was given full control of the income of her estate, although the landed capital was yet in the hands of her trustees, one being Mr. Robert Ca-

risbrooke, and the other General Carson, who was also Steenie's guardian.

The hospitality of "The Cedars" was as unrestricted as in the old days. The Chicago property was paying large interests, and the young mistress of the old house was as generously lavish in expenditure as had been her ancestor, the princely and prodigal Palatine.

Miss Esmond's home had been lost in the flames of Richmond. At the time of Rue's return Mrs. Hartley, Miss Esmond, and Anne Warrington—the victims of three conflagrations—were living together in a small rented house in Danville. Mrs. Hartley's Rose, Miss Esmond's old cook, and the ancient white-headed butler from Castlewood completed the establishment, which was supported by the scanty remittances gathered by the head man from the negro tenants at Belleview.

Harry Warrington was killed during the defence of Richmond, and the Warrington place on the Rappahannock was a deserted ruin.

Small as was Mrs. Hartley's income, it was the sole resource of the household. And even to supply the wants of her friends she would not confess her poverty or ask aid of Captain Hart-

ley, who at rare intervals wrote ceremonious notes of inquiry and ceremonious offers of service. To Mrs. Cartaret she simply explained the situation of her friends, and made their situation her reason for staying in Virginia when the suggestion was made that she should go to Oakhill. The only help that did come was in the form of rich and expensive Parisian toilets from Mrs. Cartaret, which were sold in Richmond when the needs of the household were greatest. From the dressmaker who was trusted to make these sales Rue learned where her cousin was staying and something of her cousin's need.

Steenie and the governess who had come with them from Montreal had driven to town in the Cartaret coach with the Cartaret heiress. The carriage left the sisters and their chaperone at the Exchange Hotel and went back empty, but the coachman carried an order to "The Cedars" to have the house prepared for a large party of visitors, and Oscar was requested to bring Mammy Sara and some luggage that was needed that night to the hotel. The orders were promptly obeyed.

Leaving Steenie, the governess, and maid to await her return at the Exchange, Rue, with Os-

car as travelling attendant, started to Danville in the early morning train.

From this expedition the "Princess" came back in triumph. After a hard-fought battle with Miss Esmond she captured the entire household. The third day the three ladies returned with Rue; and before another week their effects followed in charge of the colored detachment, commanded by Oscar.

From that day Rue made a voluntary renunciation of her sovereignty. The homeless and penniless spinster was the high court of appeal at "The Cedars." All household questions were referred to her, and Rue was simply the first of her subjects. Until her death, which happened two years later, Miss Esmond was firmly convinced that it would be impossible for the sisters to reside at "The Cedars" without the protection of her presence. Mrs. Hartley and Anne Warrington were installed as counsellors. The womanly side of Rue's character was never so beautifully shown as in the respectful and deferential manner with which she treated these guests, and the tenacity with which she exacted for them alike respect from all of her household. The Montreal governess was dismissed for an

ill-tempered argument with Miss Esmond; and the only time Rue ever spoke with even a tone of reproof to Steenie was for a childish impertinence ventured in her governess's defence.

The Hartleys still stayed abroad. Mrs. Cartaret's letters were all about her niece—she now openly called Mai her niece.

The Hartleys had taken an apartment on the Champs Elysées. In the winter the letters were of diplomatic and imperial balls and dinners, of evenings at the opera and receptions in *the Faubourg*—for the Rameaux were of the old nobility. Then vintage scenes were photographed from the château in Touraine. There were short trips in the spring to Italy; summer junketings in the Alpine country; Bohemian frolics in the Tyrol; and rhapsodies of written delight from the Rhineland.

Mrs. Cartaret had found that revival of youth, that wonderful Indian summer, which regilds the life of women in France, and so she let herself float with the current. She had eaten the leaves of the lotus "compliment" until she was drunk with the subtle essence of that penetrative aroma, which creeps to the brain and fills life with the sensuous breathing of the self-flattery which

it awakens. The moral consciousness was lost in this lethargy of soul and intellect, and the painful spectacle was presented of their entire subjugation to physical suggestion and impression.

Mrs. Carisbrooke would have defined it as a going back into the "Hartley animalism," a lapse, or rather a loss, of that more "remote accident" of ancestorship which had lifted Julia out of the direct Hartley line.

Whatever it was, the change had been accomplished. Mrs. Carisbrooke would have seized and defined the fact. Kate only felt it. But the feeling was enough. It was the first loosening of the old influence her sister-in-law had held in her life. Every fresh letter from Paris was further detachment.

In loosening the past Kate had gained strength for the future—strength and insight; and the dawning of insight is the dawning of wisdom. She saw clearly the wrong she had done herself in following the world's ruling. She, too, had flattered herself with delusions; only her delusions had been built into a stately fabric, which she had called *self-renunciation.* But that self-renunciation was neither for God's sake nor for

humanity's sake. It was only a compromise with the powers and principalities that are embodied in that pregnant evil called the world.

Her veiled separation had enforced upon her not only a thousand petty hypocrisies but a false and barren life. It had hardened Hartley into a criminal, and brought Hagar to madness before it brought her to repentance.

Kate knew now that she should have let no persuasion sway her, no cowardly fear of the world's opinion persuade her to a lie. Had she loved the sinner while hating the sin the wound must have healed. But the failure in forgiveness taught her the mistake which had maimed her life. It was not the faithlessness of another, but her own lack of love. She was learning painfully that great heart-truth which is the last lesson wisdom teaches the feelings—that to be loved is nothing, but to love is everything!

Not in receiving but in giving is the soul filled with light and lifted heavenward.

Kate's first enlightenment had come through her meeting with Leszinksky. Fortunately for her, it had come before the turning-point in her life had been reached. Her own miserable failure had blinded her to the heavenly possibilities

of love. Pride, which is the first of human as love is of divine qualities, had saved her from the abandonment of her personal dignity. But the concealed separation forced falsehood into every action of the daily life which was itself a lie.

In such an existence one of two terminations is inevitable, unless the mortal tie should break. If a strong temptation comes and the devil Opportunity stands by, the stained soul sinks to the lowest level; or if temptation is absent, or resisted only through base fear of the world, fold by fold the soul is encased in the cerements that preserve its stains and make them immortal.

Leszinksky's love for her cousin, which had conquered death in waiting trustfully for the last and perfect reunion, was a revelation to the woman whose first awakening was a passionate and selfish impulse. As I have said, it was the revelation of a new gospel. Its first effect was conviction of sin. Its second was the strengthening of the higher pride. Then through slow processes came the gradual sloughing off of falsehood. The small daily deceits of her life were dropped. Those who stood behind the curtain when the actress made her entrances and exits upon the world's stage saw the dropping of de-

ceptions. Then, after Leszinksky's death, shams were set aside and the long-delayed battle with the world was accepted.

It was the end of all the false things in her life; from that moment she determined that no persuasion, no worldly reasoning should ever again prevail with her, should ever win her back to a mere show and pretence of marriage. "For Julia's sake"—Julia had not then lost her influence—"for Julia's sake I will not take the world into my confidence; for her sake, and for the sake of the Cartaret name, I will not go into a divorce court. But I will act no more untruths; I will live my life entirely apart from her brother, and as I think life ought to be lived."

This thought was ruling her when suddenly in the summer of 1867 Mrs. Cartaret arrived at "The Cedars."

There were other guests there—Dr. and Mrs. Carisbrooke, Molly and her children.

Carson had made a day's visit to "The Cedars" during the previous winter, when Rue's chilliness had partially thawed.

In the spring Miss Esmond's health began to fail, and once or twice she expressed a wish to

see Dr. Carisbrooke. Rue commenced a ceremonious letter of invitation; happening to look up from her writing, she saw her father's sword hanging above an old sabre of Carson's which had been broken in that desperate fight at Bouie's Hill, and which she had kept and brought to "The Cedars" with her treasures. Her father had hung it where it now was. The thought of her father, which had heretofore embittered her when she recollected the anguish in his face at the last hour of his life and the look of search for the absent, now softened her feeling.

The broken sword conquered a peace.

A cordially-written invitation brought all the family from Rosebank, glad, eager to show their gladness at the return of the old-time kindliness. Carson had come, too, but now he was at West Point. In a day or two he would return, and with him "King Stan's" godson.

Dr. Carisbrooke had advised the seashore for Miss Esmond and for Steenie, who had been delicate and strangely despondent all summer. Rue and Dr. Carisbrooke went with the invalids to Cape May. They left them there with Anne Warrington and Mammy Sara as guards and care-takers. Rue had offered to excuse

herself to her guests and stay with her sister, but Steenie had insisted that Rue should leave them.

Rue rather reluctantly admitted the truth of Steenie's last argument.

"You will spoil me, sister, and you are over-careful and anxious; I think that is one reason I am so nervous. Please leave me with Miss Esmond and Anne. I cannot tell why it is, but your manner, your constant watchfulness, excites me; I am better alone."

So the older sister uttered no further word of objection to her dismissal.

The day after the doctor and Rue returned Carson came without his son. The young cadet had stopped to make a short stay with a comrade who lived in Philadelphia. That afternoon Mrs. Cartaret drove out from Richmond.

She had just arrived from Paris, but she "could not stay"—not even that night. "There were business matters of moment awaiting her return to Washington. She came to take Kate back with her." Such were her answers to Rue's hospitable urging.

The sisters-in-law were left together, and Mrs. Cartaret's explanation grew more definite. Her

brother had come with her. Oakhill was sold and Kate's signature was needed.

There were also other deeds to be signed in which her right of dower must be relinquished. At first Kate refused to go, at which Julia looked curiously astonished. When Kate made no explanation of her refusal her sister-in-law returned to the attack. "Did Kate object to the relinquishment of right in the property?" The answer more than intimated that Kate "did not care at all for the property, but she did not wish to see Captain Hartley." The next question was direct:

"What is it, Kate? What slander has been told you?"

"No slander; simply I do not choose to see your brother."

"This is Virginia Carisbrooke's meddling."

"Which is unjust to Mrs. Carisbrooke. You know that I have been virtually divorced from your brother for years. I now prefer that the separation should be known and real."

"Do you mean to apply for a divorce, Kate?"

"I do not, but I mean to live alone."

"Well, if you are happier I shall urge no objection, neither will Wenner; in fact, he is going

back to Paris with me. But, Kate, you are his wife in point of law, and it is absolutely necessary that you sign these deeds. Moreover, it is partly to oblige me ; I am going to be married to a cousin of the Duc de Rameaux, and Wenner has promised to pay the *dot*."

This was said with a flippant, silly giggle and an affectation of youthful ingenuousness that first amazed Kate and then touched a different key. She tried in vain to restrain the laugh that would come. The effort to be grave helped the comic effect. There was a hearty outburst of laughter, which Mrs. Cartaret's look of embarrassment first increased and then stilled. Before the now angry *ingénue* found words Kate softened her by yielding to the request she had preferred.

"Of course, Julia, if it is really important to you that I should go to Washington, I will go. I beg your pardon for my ill-timed mirth. I am not given to such silliness, but something upset me ; I think I am nervous. Must you absolutely go to-night? Can you not wait until the early train to-morrow?"

"No ; I cannot fail to be there to-night. Wenner will expect to meet me early to-morrow morn-

ing. He is to come from New York in the night train."

There was still a shade of anger in her voice, and Kate wisely left her to rest and recover. "There was need of preparation for the trip." The ladies all returned to entertain Mrs. Cartaret, and after an early dinner Rue sent the travellers to the station without their going back to Richmond.

Kate returned in two days. The news of Mrs. Cartaret's engagement was told, and the evening was filled with questions and laughing comments until good-nights were said.

Rose had finished her duties and left her mistress when Mrs. Carisbrooke knocked at the door and asked:

"Are you very sleepy, Kate? May I come in?"

"Not at all sleepy; and I shall rest better if you will come in and say your say."

"No, Kate; I came to listen. If you have nothing to tell me I shall only repeat my good-night."

"What is it you wish to hear?"

"I am not difficult. I will be content with scraps of information. To simplify the process suppose you begin at the beginning."

"Which beginning?"

"Well, with Julia's raid upon 'The Cedars.' Why were you wanted in Washington? and what argument prevailed upon you to meet Captain Hartley? I know you had resolved to avoid such a meeting."

"I have never said it."

"I do not remember that you have—in words. But then, my Kate, you have told me times without number when you were unconscious of the telling. I should be very stupid if I had not learned your face in all these years."

"Captain Hartley has sold Oakhill, the house in Washington, and some property in New York. It was necessary that I should sign the deeds. At first I hesitated about going, even to do that, which I was quite willing to do. Then Julia told me of her intended marriage. These sales were made to arrange the payment of her *dot*."

"I did not know she had any interest in old Simon Hartley's estate. I always thought he left her nothing."

"She had no interest in it; but her brother assumed the debt I was owing her. He released Belleview from the settlement of her jointure.

My father had made it a charge upon the estate."

"I would not have believed Captain Hartley had ever been so generous to either you or Julia. Ah! I see he was not. Your face is a very open book, my Kate. Will you tell me what was the consideration upon which his liberality builded?"

"I think he was generous in the matter, Mrs. Carisbrooke. At least he took risks in order that Belleview might belong to me unencumbered. He paid Julia, or rather she released the estate and took his note for the money. He also paid a chattel mortgage on the negroes—a debt that troubled me greatly. I was very anxious to be independent, to own my home and have it free. To arrange that for me he cleared it of all indebtedness. Of course I was only too glad to relinquish any right in his property."

"Oh! I understand: he bought your right of dower. Well, it seems you sold it to advantage. His real estate was no great fortune; and I hear that the Hartley millions in stocks have melted."

"I hope you do not think I took his money for relinquishment of his property. I have never thought I had any right to his wealth. That

was why the indebtedness I was under to him in the settlement of my father's estate so troubled me. But I did not think Captain Hartley paid by my giving up a claim I should never have urged, which it would not have been honest to urge."

"But, Kate, I do not understand. Did not you say the relinquishment of dower was the consideration?"

"Not the only one. In fact, I thought that nothing. I transferred to him my right of inheritance in that Alabama estate of my father's uncle—all right of inheritance from the Cartaret family. There were some lands in western Virginia, which were afterwards valuable. You know we won the Cartaret suit in the Supreme Court. I was glad to know the western Virginia lands alone paid Captain Hartley all I owed him. The Alabama property is comparatively valueless."

"You s-i-g-n-e-d a-w-a-y *all rights coming from the Cartarets?*"

"Yes."

Mrs. Carisbrooke sprang upon her feet and looked steadily at Kate as she said:

"Do you know what you have done? Do you know that you have mortgaged Rue's life to that

scoundrel? Do you know that you have made him the heir of 'The Cedars'? One by one he has removed every obstacle! I see it now. I believe all Carson's, all Robert Carisbrooke's suspicions to be well grounded. To spare your feelings we kept this from you. After your separation from him they all thought Rue safe; for without you he would have no claim. But now? Why, in selling your right you have almost put the prize he coveted in his hands. You have put a price upon Rue's life. If his cupidity halts it is through fear of Carson. Carson has sworn to him to kill him if Rue dies by any accident, any violence."

White, pale, and trembling, Kate slid from the bed and caught at her friend's hands:

'Mrs. Carisbrooke! Mrs. Carisbrooke! you think him capable of *murder?*"

"Carson believes the attack upon Bouie's Hill was aimed at Rue's life. He believes Hartley instigated that attack. The proofs are too broken and slight to convict him; but they were convincing to Carson and to—to others. I know Stanislaus Leszinksky struggled against his own beliefs. Kate, can you bear to hear more?"

"Yes; go on."

A sweeping cloud of black hair had fallen over her night-dress. Above it a white face was set in rigid lines. The only color was the flashing light of the dark eyes, which were fixed steadily upon Mrs. Carisbrooke.

"Kate, it will take all your courage, but you must hear it; the case now is desperate, and it needs desperate remedies. You remember the English horse which killed your brother?"

"Yes; Captain Hartley bought it when we were in London."

"He told Tom it was savage and unmanageable; but he did not tell him that it had killed a groom, as it afterward killed Tom."

"You believe—"

"That when he bought the horse Hartley was thinking of 'the great Cartaret estate.' He told the story of Tom's death to your father in such an abrupt manner that the telling killed him."

"And you all thought this and left me with a *murderer?*"

"Not in the beginning. The proof of the attack at Bouie's Hill changed what was until then regarded as an unjust and unwarranted conclusion of Robert's into well-grounded suspicion."

"*My brother! My father!*"

The cry was not only the cry of grief; it was the challenge of revenge. Mrs. Carisbrooke caught up a light shawl and wrapped it about Kate, and pushed the soft, wadded slippers toward the bare feet.

"Come, Kate, we must go at once to Carisbrooke. He is with Carson in the library."

As the library door opened two astonished gentlemen threw down their cigars and rose hastily. The doctor asked:

"What has happened, Virginia?"

"Kate has sold her interest in Rue's inheritance to Hartley."

There was a hurried "What!" from Doctor Carisbrooke and the muttered thunder of a terrible oath from the ex-dragoon.

The story was told by Mrs. Carisbrooke. Seating Kate and throwing a rug about her, Doctor Carisbrooke began a cool questioning of the excited witness:

"When did you sign the agreement of transfer?"

"Several years ago in Washington before the suit in the Supreme Court was decided."

"Was it read to you? Did you understand it perfectly?"

"Yes; it was read. Captain Hartley's attorney and a notary were present. Julia and Captain Hartley's secretary witnessed it. I never thought of Rue or of any possible interest I might ever have in 'The Cedars.'"

"Was there any mention of the old agreement when you were in Washington yesterday?"

"Yes; after I had signed the deeds of sale Captain Hartley gave me two papers to sign, which I read. One was an acknowledgment for the moneys he had paid out for my father's estate. The other—O Doctor Carisbrooke! I see now how I was deceived—the other was a long legal document with different items, I do not know what, but something about the legacies to which I signed my relinquishment. There was another small, thin parchment attached; I think it was pinned to that paper. I suspected nothing, and I looked at it carelessly; but I remember there was a confusing repetition of all actual and possible heirship from 'the Cartaret estate.' I am sure now it was so expressed—'*the Cartaret estate.*' I thought only of my father's estate."

"Fortunately you are still living to testify to that. The crafty scoundrel has not possession of

'The Cedars' yet. But we must force him to surrender the papers you signed ignorantly."

Carson, who had been walking the room to cool his rage, said:

"I will go to Washington in the early morning train. By ——, I mean he shall give them up!"

The doctor looked at him musingly, with as much deliberation as if Carson was a patient amiably waiting for a prescription, then he said:

"I do not think you had better go alone. We must be careful to have witnesses. And the demand must be made by Robert as Kate's trustee—you and Robert together, for you are Rue's trustees. I think I will be your best witness. You had better take me. But you must send some one to Richmond for Robert. Come to think of it, we will go to Richmond, late as it is. It is the only way to explain to Robert the urgency of the matter. No, do not ring; that will rouse the household. It is better not to say anything of this to Rue or Molly; I would rather they did not know. Rue would be either angry or careless, and Molly needlessly nervous and alarmed. Better tell them it is a matter of Kate's—a signature which she was deceived into giving. I shall be Jesuit enough not to tell all

the truth. Kate will have to go with us. And, Virginia, you had better come. Can you be ready in time, and meet us in the morning at the station near here? We will start from Richmond."

Mrs. Carisbrooke promised, and the doctor and Carson went out to find Oscar.

When they returned Kate had gone to her room. Mrs. Carisbrooke was waiting. Carson went to say good-by to Molly and give his partial explanation. While the doctor was packing his small valise Mrs. Carisbrooke asked:

"If Hartley has gone to New York?"

"We will go on."

"Then I had better go prepared for that trip?"

"Yes; and tell Kate. Virginia, make Kate understand that she must get a divorce. I feel sure it is the only safe way out of this business. That would force a final settlement. Every day's delay gives this fellow a chance to plot new villany."

"One would think, Carisbrooke, we were back in the middle ages; and yet it seems half ridiculous to think of Simon Hartley's heir as a nineteenth-century Borgia."

The doctor stopped his packing and looked up.

"It is rather queer, now that I think of it. I saw old Hartley just before his death; as you spoke his face came back to me. And I remembered at once that he did resemble that picture of Cæsar Borgia we saw in Rome. It is queer. But now I have stupidly set you off on your pet craze. There you go!"

She was softly clapping her hands and nodding at him.

"O Carisbrooke! you have stumbled on a discovery. I remember that picture. Hartley himself will look just like it, if he is not hanged too early in life. And Mai! and Mai!—I have tried and tried to trace her beauty to my gambler. The effort was always a failure; but I know now where the classic head was modelled. Brow, and head, and chin—all Borgia! All my gambler did was to keep the hook out of his grandchild's nose. Why, you dear old Carisbrooke, we have stumbled backward into the middle ages with a vengeance. That head of Stan's in the library, with its high resolve, is not the head of a soldier. He is our mediæval saint; Rue is—"

"Virginia, we are all—I nearly said it, and it

would have been true. But I will say I am a booby, without characterizing the rest of the family. Do please leave the middle ages rotten and forgotten, and find me some shirts with buttons on."

"Carisbrooke, you are the very nicest *old* man I know, but you are brutally unpoetic. My brilliant imagination and my scholarly inquisitiveness are wasted qualities. I have not even been able to transmit them to Molly. She is as stolid and matter-of-fact as—her latest ancestor."

"Thank Heaven! She is not mediæval."

"No, she isn't. She, and you, and Carson would anchor any house to the prosaic. Here are the shirts."

"Thank you! Good-night! Be at the station in time. Better see Kate again to-night and tell her to be prepared to go to New York. When will you tell Rue of this flitting—to-night or in the early morning?"

"Why, to-night, of course. The *châtelaine* must be warned of our departure, and I must tell without telling the reason. How much she will miss us!"

"She will have Molly."

"Which means reason, and common sense. I

understand the stab and the self-gratulation! Adieu, my ancient and revered *medicus!*"

Kate and Mrs. Carisbrooke were standing on the platform next morning as the Richmond train for Washington approached. Carson was on the steps as it stopped, and they were met at the door by the doctor and his brother. There were repressed eagerness and excitement in every face.

In Washington the ladies waited at the station until the gentlemen returned. Hartley had gone on to New York.

That night the self-appointed deputation arrived at the New York Hotel. Hartley was not in town.

The pursuit was not given up. They drove out to Oakhill. He had not been there since the night before he went to Washington to see his sister. Neither had Mrs. Cartaret been there.

The disappointed detachment returned to New York, and a fresh examination of the hotel registers proved that Hartley and his sister had come on from Washington the same day Kate returned to "The Cedars."

They had spent the night at the Astor House, and sailed the next morning for Liverpool.

The pursuit was ended.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

"Now for the love of God and of seint Jon
Leseth no tyme, but forthe as ye may."

KATE would not listen to reason in the person of Mrs. Carisbrooke. "A divorce? No!" She remembered Leszinksky's words: "A legal separation *de corps et de biens?*" "If that was needed to get the papers—yes. That would only be a lawful ratification of existent conditions." Even that she would not do if Hartley would surrender all claim, real or possible, that she had ignorantly signed away to Rue's inheritance. She "had already written to him and to Julia, and she felt sure he would give up those papers. Public scandal was unnecessary. He would yield to her demand, supported as it was by Mr. Robert Carisbrooke, who had been the executor of her father's will." As Carson, for private reasons of his own, was inclined to this opinion, it was decided in the Carisbrooke council to wait for Hartley's answer.

Dr. Carisbrooke's holiday was over. He had

to return to patients who were grumbling at his prolonged absence. Mrs. Carisbrooke and little Brooke Carson went to Cincinnati with him.

Miss Esmond, Anne Warrington, and Steenie were still at Cape May. Dr. Carisbrooke had thought it better for the invalids not to return until the October frosts had conquered the miasma that crept up with the east wind from the Chickahominy.

When the health-seekers should return from Cape May, Kate was going South with the Robert Carisbrookes—to Selma, to Mobile, and then to Havana for the winter. They insisted she should stay with them until her affairs were definitely settled.

The Carsons had promised to winter at "The Cedars." In fact, Carson knew he would be constantly anxious and expectant away from there.

The "Borgia" *redivivus* of Mrs. Carisbrooke was the *bête noire* of the ex-dragoon.

(When a practical, unimaginative man makes a hobby of a dislike it sets him chasing the wildest fancies. In the simplest incident he sees the working of sinister design. Every noise is a note of warning, every stranger a person to be suspected.)

The notion was firmly fixed in Carson's mind that he was defending a fortress. He jealously guarded approach to "The Cedars," and he soon had two devoted and vigilant aids.

The first moment she could learn where they were after the war was ended Rue had sent to Stearns and Pike to come to "The Cedars."

Bob promptly answered the summons, and was immediately installed as overseer and general factotum of "Cap'n Rue's" dominions.

Pike was glad to visit the children of his beloved friends, but he refused to make his home with them, as he had refused the invitation of their father. He said that he "hadn't never l'arnt the ways of the old settle*ments*," adding that he "felt freer and nigher God when he could study his will in the woods, and the hills, and the plains, whar it was writ for the dumb critters, and the men He had called to smooth the rough places and make the paths straight fur the comin' of his Gospel."

So after a short visit the maimed missionary took leave of his friend's children and his old comrade. He went back to his work among the outlaws and savages of the border.

The Osages and the Pawnees, even the wild

Comanches, who had tortured him until he was but a wreck of the strong man they had known as a "great brave and a mighty hunter," gave him a cordial welcome. Warrior after warrior would come with stately dignity to the lodge-door when the village dogs barked their recognition and the children shouted the coming of "the crippled chief who had come alive out of the fire to bring the messages of the Great Spirit to his red children."

The Indian women forgot the heaviness of labor and the pains of unassisted travail in their generous eagerness to add something to the simple fare they put before this beloved guest.

Pike's martyrdom had won him the freedom of the forest and an influence for good with tribes and peoples that can never be fully reckoned until the last day, when he shall stand, with his "sheaves in his hand," face to face with the great Teacher who called him to bring into the fold the lost sheep of the mountains and the desert. Unlettered in the teachings of this world, unlearned in the dogmas of schools and creeds, not by the installation of churchmen or the laying-on of hands was he made a help and a light to the poor and the needy. The still,

small voice had called him through God's working in his own heart, and the way of life had been revealed to him in the law of love as it ruled the life of Leszinksky.

Carson sent Bob to Pike with a message.

Bob heard of Pike first at the Seminole village; he had just left there to visit a tribe in the Wichita Hills. At the crossing of the Washita that evening Bob found him. Carson's fears and needs, as he had told them to Bob, were told to Pike.

"Yes, Bob, I'll go. It's fur the sake of the child of our old lootenant. I darsn't refuse to go. The Lord's put it upon me. I ain't a bit o' trouble in my mind about the right on it."

Bob's message had been given, and the consent was instantaneous. The simple, receptive mind understood the call: "The Master hath need of thee."

Rue, without knowing the cause of his coming or the solicitude of her friends, gave Pike the kindest and warmest of welcomes.

Carson could now sum up his defensive force with a feeling of content and satisfaction. Pike, Bob, and Oscar were of tried devotion.

The negroes on the place were the most faith-

ful of the old family servants. Carson was sure that in reconsidering his first decision to employ a detective he had done well. Pike and Bob were more trustworthy.

Before these arrangements were perfected or Bob had returned with Pike, late one afternoon the young West Point cadet arrived at "The Cedars" from Cape May, where he had gone with his Philadelphia comrade to see Steenie.

Mrs. Hartley was in Richmond, Carson was out in the grounds, and Molly had gone to her room with Daisy.

Rue had tea brought out on the piazza. She told the boy—he was yet but a boy—of the Carisbrookes' departure, of his father, and of Molly and the children while the servant waited; but when Mead had gone with the tea-things she asked:

"Was Steenie looking quite well?"

"No, and yes; she is looking wonderfully pretty, but there is a change in the 'Hummingbird' that I do not understand. I presume I scarcely realize that she is no longer a child. If it is not an indiscretion I would like to ask you a question, Rue."

"Ask it; a wise cousin's question could not well be indiscreet."

"That handsome dandy, Bradnor, was constantly in attendance upon Steenie; and whenever I hear from you he always is or has been at 'The Cedars.' Is he engaged to Steenie?"

"No." The answer was sharp and decided; but the boy, watching her face, saw no change there except a slight quiver in the lines about the mouth.

"I see *you* are not in love with him, Rue; but I am very much afraid that Steenie is. She has eyes and ears for no one else, which rather touches my vanity. It is so long since those old days when we were always together, I suppose she has forgotten them."

"That is merely a jealous deception of your vanity, Stan."

"Am I jealous?"

"Yes; you always were. You used to be jealous of my love for Steenie. Now, Stan, it is of Steenie's impossible suitor."

"Not at all impossible. I watched the fellow closely; and, to convince you that it is not jealousy, I will tell you that what most offended me was the change in his manner to Steenie when Miss Esmond or Miss Warrington were present. It was then a teasing, bantering manner, an effort

to treat her as a child—a manner that annoyed Steenie; it always brought burning red spots into her cheeks. If Steenie is ill, Rue, that fellow is partly, if not altogether, the cause. I am telling you honestly, Rue, what I believe. I am sure Steenie loves him. I did not mean to give you all my reasons, but your incredulous look is a challenge; besides, I only waited to ask you if they were engaged before—as you tell me they are not engaged, I will teach the fellow to mend his manners."

"Stan, you are altogether wrong. It is a mistake."

"Rue, I saw their parting the evening before I left Cape May. I was in the parlor waiting for Steenie when she and Bradnor came to the window which opens upon the veranda. I started to meet them when I heard Bradnor say, 'I shall say good-by here, my darling,' and he took Steenie in his arms and kissed her. She came in and passed me without seeing me—she was blinded by her tears. She is to me a sister. My first impulse was to follow him, but I thought they might be engaged. I knew he had been very kind to Uncle Stan and to you."

She could not tell him she was herself engaged

to Bradnor, and yet the reticence seemed unfair. Suddenly he asked:

"Is that my father out there under that clump of cedars—there to the right of the avenue?"

"No. You are losing your sight, Stan. I did not think West Point would so ruin a frontiersman's eyes. That is Oscar."

"I could not see the face, and he has a soldierly figure. What a pretty effect the red tint of the evening gives as it creeps under the dark cedars! It reminds me of the sunsets at Bouie's Hill."

There was a faint "Halloo!" over in the grounds toward the river. The figure under the trees bounded out in the open and ran rapidly down the sloping sward. They saw him jump a fence and cross the wavy pasture-field, then he vanished behind the woods that fringed the river-bank.

"Could that be my father calling? What is wrong? Oscar ran like a stag which seeks cover."

"It is nothing. You forget we are not on the frontier."

"I wish we were on the frontier, Rue; I like best the life of the woods. I wish we were living

in the Wichita Hills. I have never seen anything so beautiful as that enchanting valley of the 'Three Mountains.' I am more than half Indian, Rue. When I think of my grandfather, of his brave, life-long fight with such odds against him, of his death on the Rio Grande, I am altogether a Seminole."

Both were silent; then the boy's voice changed from the ring of defiance to a low, caressing tone as he took Rue's hand and carried it to his lips.

"But for you, Rue, I would never have left my mother's people. I did not mean to tell you, Rue, until I could bring you some proof that I came from a race of warrior-kings, some deed of valor or devotion that would have won me a distinctive title in the lodges of my people—a title which would have given me the right to tell the daughter of Leszinksky that I love her. I do not know when I have not loved you, Rue; I have had but two thoughts all my life—you and my mother's people. To please you I listened to my father's pleading and accepted a position which, without thought of you as reward, the grandson of Coacoochee would have spurned. But now that I have told you this, Ning-ah-shaw-na-qui-ta, tell me what I can do to win

you. For life is nothing if I may not always turn to one star. The light of my life, my proud, brave Rue, daughter of kings, is the light of your eyes—soft, tender, beautiful eyes, yet I have seen the light of battle flash in them. I have always loved you, my Princess, though I never knew what my worship meant until we were separated for so long. Then I thought over every day of our happy childhood, and I knew that my love, the one true, passionate, eternal love, sprang into life when I stood beside my dead mother, desperate and hopeless, until I looked up and saw you, my darling! From that instant my life and my love were yours. What will you do with them, Rue?"

She threw her arms around his neck and kissed him again and again, not passionately—he felt it was not love—but with a strong outburst of grief.

"O Stan! O my cousin! I love you, Stan! I love you dearly. How shall I refuse your love? How shall I tell you?"

"What?"

And he held her back from him and looked into her eyes.

"Stan! Stan! You were mistaken about

Steenie: it is I who am to marry Colonel Bradnor, not Steenie. O Stan! I had always thought some day to give you Steenie."

"Farewell, Rue! My darling, my lost love, good-by!"

Oscar did not go directly to the point which the sound indicated.

He had seen General Carson in the low, sedgy stretch of delta formed by a creek which flowed for some distance behind the wooded bluff on the James that formed the southwestern boundary of "The Cedars."

A moment before the call came Oscar saw a man run across a cleared field which extended from the marshy delta to the edge of the wood that scantily fringed the uneven swells of the low, rising hills into which the bluff was broken by the abrupt curve of the river.

Taking Carson's shout as a warning not to let the person escape, Oscar ran toward a point where he believed he could intercept the fugitive, who would have to make a sharp ascent of the high bluff commanding the bank of the river above the curve.

In the crafts of the woodsman and the runner

Oscar's judgment was rarely at fault. He did arrive first. He heard the snapping of twigs which broke in the grasp of the tired climber; then he heard the panting breath of the man who was breaking the twigs. Keeping under the shelter of the undergrowth, he waited.

As he gained the summit the man was looking back at Carson. Unfortunately Carson had kept on the narrow bank, beneath the heights, until it suddenly ended, and he was forced to go back some distance before he could climb the bluff. This had given the fugitive time. With one more glance at Carson, as if he wished to doubly assure himself that the distance was safe, he sat down to rest.

Oscar could now see the man's features distinctly. It was Hartley's old servant, Marten.

For three or four minutes there was neither motion nor sound save the swashing of the water as it struck the rounded point it was slowly wearing away, and the long-drawn breaths of the man who was watching for the approach of his pursuer.

Rising, Marten took from his pocket a poniard. He pulled it from its sheath, muttering as he examined the point :

"If he forces me to it I'll kill him. I've lost my chance of seeing the girl, so I'd as well stick to Hartley."

Oscar had left the shelter of the bushes and was almost upon Marten when he looked up. As they clinched the negro's hand was badly cut, but he had Marten by the throat and had forced him to drop the dagger. Then he threw him face downward, and kneeled upon his back to pinion him to the ground while he searched for the weapon. Failing to find it in the dim twilight, he lifted Marten by the back of the collar and waistband and carried him to the extreme point where the bluff hung over the river. The man writhed and twisted like a serpent in his effort to grasp the enemy who held him aloft, relentless as fate. There was a swinging to and fro to give the needed impetus; then, as if from a catapult, Marten was thrown far out into the whirling curve of the waters, which were going out with the tide to the sea.

Carson, climbing the ascent, heard a frightful mingling of prayers and imprecations; when he arrived, the first thing he saw was that terrible act of vengeance.

"Good God, Oscar! you have killed him."

"Yes, Marse Carson, I've paid his 'count fur the massiker thar at Bouie's Hill and the old debt that's been a-waitin' ever since them days when he used to come to my cabin on business for the devil, his master. It's allus been borne in on my mind that I'd get a chance at Cap'n Hartley yet, and now I'm 'most sure of it. The Lord 'ill d'liver him into my hands, like he did that murderous houn'. Lucy's debt ain't paid, and my Marse Stan's chile ain't safe while that head devil is out o' hell. I know it, sir; I'se allus looked fur it: I'll kill him yet."

While he was talking he was on his knees searching again for the weapon. At length, having found it, he came with it to Carson.

"Here it is, sir; and here is the sheath that he dropped when he saw me."

"What is it?"

"The knife he cut me with—the knife he tuck out when he was waitin' here fur you, sir."

After further question Carson knew that Oscar would come unharmed out of a trial. A case of self-defence could be made, if Oscar would only be silent as to the hatred grown out of the past. They went on to the house, and Carson's last direction to Oscar was to say nothing of the occur-

rence for the present, but to search the river-bank early in the morning for the boat in which he was sure Marten had come to "The Cedars."

After a night's reflection Carson determined to leave any discovery of Marten's fate to chance. If the waters cast him ashore it would be time enough to tell the story of Oscar's throwing an armed assailant and marauder into the river. The secret kept would leave Hartley uneasy. *The slight pressure of an imaginary screw might force him to return the papers.*

Carson had already written a request for the papers, which was also a plain and positive expression of certain beliefs he entertained not peculiarly flattering to Hartley. He now supplemented that letter with a second epistle, in which he made a fresh avowal of his "beliefs, not merely predicated upon suspicion, but based upon irrefutable proofs now *in secure custody.*" He weighed every word with the precision of a jurist. Without saying it he wished Hartley to infer that he held Marten, who, either willingly or unwillingly, had betrayed his master.

After writing this very satisfactory and fulminatory letter Carson went out in the grounds in the early morning to look for Oscar and to charge

him to hold his peace about "the accident on the bluff," which Oscar was very willing to do. In truth, the negro's conscience was either so dull or it so entirely justified him that it left him undisturbed about consequences and utterly regardless of himself in the matter of Marten's death. In fact, by a different train of thought he had come to Carson's conclusion, that to entrap Hartley the "accident, as Marse Carson called it," had better be kept secret for the present.

In this serene state of fancied security I will leave them while I follow the young cadet, whose visit Rue had not yet found it convenient to mention.

He left the house unseen by any of the people of the place; in fact, only Rue and Mead knew of his arrival. That night Mead had orders from his mistress to forget the fact.

The young cadet walked rapidly down the avenue. At first he thought to go directly to the station from which he had walked to "The Cedars." Then, remembering that his luggage had gone on to Richmond to be left at the Exchange, and that his father would probably be in town the next day and hear of his so speedily terminated visit, he turned from the avenue to-

ward the point from which he had heard his father's "Halloo!"

He would rather have avoided the meeting just then, but he thought it would be impossible for him to leave Richmond, or even the plantation, without being recognized. Neither did he foresee the assistance he would receive in the orders given to Mead.

He had crossed the brook that environed the lawn, and was walking in the woods which skirted the left of the open fields between the house grounds and the swampy delta of the "bluff creek."

Every step in the direction of his father had increased the boy's reluctance to meet him and tell the story of his rejection.

He had stopped for an instant to reflect upon the chances of getting to Richmond and leaving there that night. He was just at the edge of the wood, and close to a little channel, the eastern mouth of the creek, which he could see ran into the James. Not five yards distant a small row-boat was pulled up under the low-hanging boughs of the willows.

Without a moment's hesitation, thinking it a fortunate issue out of a dilemma, young Carson

pushed the boat out into the water, and after five minutes' steady rowing was out in the James.

Just then the whistle of a locomotive across the wide river, and the slacking up of a long train which was in full view, showed him an unsuspected and speedy route to Richmond. He could cross the river by rowing up to the point, and then float with the current until he gradually traversed it and reached the station on the opposite shore.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

"O Dis!
Why is this mortal here?"

ALL these different efforts at concealment were successful in different measures and ways.

Carson's met him in the morning in a mystery he could not unravel, but which filled his laboring soul with fresh anxiety.

There had been a boat, but it was gone.

He would not believe Oscar, and he scarcely believed his eyes when he saw where it had been hidden, and saw also the tracks in the red clay, hardened by the morning sun, of the man who had pushed it back in the channel. All the way from the house to the hiding-place under the willows he had argued the point with himself: "It must have been stolen by some negro who was prowling around in the night."

That it was the boat which had brought Marten to "The Cedars" he never doubted.

But who could have taken it away?

Had Marten a confederate?

When Carson saw the tracks of the slender boots with the pointed toes and the high instep, he knew it could be no negro's feet that had left their imprint in the clay.

But whose? Hartley's?

The suggestion was so bewildering that he left Oscar with strict orders "to stay about the house armed with revolver and derringers until his return from Richmond, where he must go at once." He impressed upon Molly in such mysterious language the necessity of her not losing sight of Rue for an instant during his absence that he left her in a mild state of doubt betwixt his sanity and Rue's.

Molly was rather inclined to think Rue the lunatic, for Rue had acted very strangely the previous evening. Molly had left Rue alone, as she thought, on the piazza while she was giving Daisy her bath and putting her to sleep, and then when she asked for her hostess she heard of a headache which had sent Rue to her room.

That afternoon Rue had seemed unusually well.

Further inquiry did not enlighten Molly. The housekeeper had "sent tea to Miss Rue and she had eaten heartily." In fact, that morning the

housekeeper had questioned Mead as to the possibility of Miss Rue having finished a cold chicken and certain dainties. To defend his truthfulness Mead had called in his mistress. "Yes; she had all those things."

Then Molly concluded Rue's headache was a deserved indigestion, while her graver doubts on the sanity question again vibrated from Rue to her husband.

"General Carson"—Molly was a martinet and always gave her husband his title—"certainly seemed queer last night; come to think of it, ever since his return from that sudden journey to New York he has been queer."

It would have been impossible for Molly to have used a more accusative word than *queer*. In fact, although she had laughed at, she had half-adopted, the belief of one of her old Virginian grandaunts: "Better be wrong than queer. You can privately repent and amend if you are wrong, or you can conceal it, my dear; but if you are queer it is patent to sight, and the world never forgives what it is forced to see."

This queerness of Carson's disturbed Molly.

Having to defend Mead from accusation, and virtually confess herself a *gourmande*, would

have ordinarily only moved Rue to laughter. But she, too, had something to conceal. She half-regretted the orders she had given Mead to say nothing of the cadet's arrival and departure; but now what explanation could she make? And she knew that Molly and Carson would both ask questions. "If Cousin Kate were here she would understand without words; but Uncle Billy and Molly must have words to aid understanding."

Later in the day Mead came to Rue with a muddled account of some boat that had been stolen from the place, "either by the gemman dat owned it or else by somebody whar had been up prowlin' 'round de house. Oscar done tole me 'bout de boat when he come askin' me if I hadn't seed nobody 'round de place yestedday. I did what you told me, Miss Rue—I said nobody hadn't been yer."

"I did not intend that; but you cannot help it now. As you have gone that far, do not go back. Say nothing of my cousin Stan."

"No, marm. Oscar ain't gwine to get nothin' out o' me."

So Rue's concealment resulted in her humiliation.

In its way Oscar's secrecy was a success. His deed neither troubled nor shamed him. He was as impassive and undisturbed as an insentient instrument of justice would be. Marten had deserved death; and he, finding opportunity, had not taken him at a disadvantage, but had executed a sentence long delayed.

Oscar's only regret was in the failure to find occasion to execute another act of justice which was overdue. Yet he thought opportunity might come before night. He had taken his dead master's derringers from their cases and carefully loaded them, and he had thrust Marten's poniard in his waistband. Carson was somewhat shocked when, as he was riding out of the gate, he turned to ask Oscar "if he was armed," and the negro coolly showed him the weapon of the man he had thrown into the river.

Carson was in Richmond all day. After sending the despatch he came to town to send he spent the day at Robert Carisbrooke's. They so perfectly agreed in their estimate of Hartley that they naturally agreed in the measure Carson had thought of.

Late that night they rode out to "The Cedars" together. No answer yet to the cable despatch.

But the next morning the message came while they were at breakfast. Molly's fear of Carson's "queerness" was somewhat relieved when she saw that her uncle Robert was bitten by a like mania.

With half-spoken excuses they hurried out upon the lawn before they opened the despatch. It was from the American minister at Paris:

"Captain Wenner Hartley is in Paris. Dined with him last night."

The two gentlemen regarded each other blankly. "Then who could it be?" said Robert Carisbrooke. "Who could it be?" echoed Carson. Mead, who might have enlightened him, came running down the avenue, saying as he passed:

"Colonel Bradnor's a-comin'; I seed him cross the field. He's a-ridin' ole Mr. Grey's hoss from de station."

Again the puzzled gentlemen looked at each other. "Could it be Bradnor?" said Robert Carisbrooke. "Could it be?" echoed Carson.

They had not long to wait; Bradnor sprang from his horse and came directly toward Carson.

"General, I came this morning from Cape May. Miss Esmond died last night."

In two hours Rue was on her way to Cape May with Bradnor and Carson.

The mansion of Castlewood was still a charred ruin, but the gates of the "House of the Dead" were opened for the stately spinster with whom the name of Esmond ended in Virginia. Anne Warrington came home with Rue from Castlewood.

Steenie had not gone to Castlewood; she said she was too unnerved by the shock of Miss Esmond's sudden death. At Rue's request Colonel Bradnor took her sister directly to "The Cedars." His stay at that time was short, and soon there was a general flitting.

Anne Warrington had a letter from her relatives in England, begging her to come home. Mr. Robert Carisbrooke went with her to New York, and, when she was on the *Scotia*, gave her a draft on the Barings for five thousand pounds.

"It belongs to you. It is the payment of an old debt owing to the Warringtons. No, certainly *I* do not give it to you. It was really paid to me for you. I give you my honor it is *in no way a gift from me.*"

Anne still looked doubtingly, but he had told

the truth. It was the old loyal debt of the Cartarets to the Warringtons—the debt of friendship which the heiress of "The Cedars" paid to the despoiled and homeless descendants of her grandfather's friend.

The week after Anne's departure the Robert Carisbrookes and Kate started southward.

Bob and Pike had arrived, and at Carson's suggestion Rue installed Pike in a great arm-chair beside the front door as hall-porter. The duty was light and the place pleased the crippled giant. He truthfully gave as reason for his delight the fact that he could see all the visitors who came. From morning till night he sat there pleasedly working the simple contrivance that made the opening easy. His only exercise was on the front piazza, where at frequent intervals the regular beat of his crutches could be heard.

Bob let the plantation work go loosely, but he made an alert and watchful picket.

Oscar was almost constantly in the saddle. It was strange how much exercise the thoroughbreds needed.

Rue could not take a quiet ride alone, as she liked sometimes to do on the plantation, without seeing Oscar, on the most mettlesome of the

plunging colts, crossing her path and scurrying through the lonely woods.

The sisters had promised to go with the Carsons to Rosebank at Christmas but Steenie nervously shrank from the journey, and so Rue gave it up.

After another investment in cable messages, Carson at length consented to leave the sisters and take Molly and Daisy to see Brooke and the "grandparents." He was compelled, he said, to go to Texas for a short trip.

The reason of that trip was an open secret.

Stanislaus Carson had resigned from West Point and gone out to join Coacoochee's son, the young chief of the Seminoles. There was trouble on the border, and Carson was anxious for the safety of "Laha's" child.

Before Carson left "The Cedars" it was arranged that the Wilsons should spend the winter there. Steenie's delicate health was sufficient reason for the invitation and its acceptance.

With Dr. Wilson and his wife at "The Cedars," and the watchful and devoted guardsmen, whose duties were clearly defined and understood, Carson felt that Rue's safety was insured.

He knew that Hartley was in Paris and would not leave there for the winter. For he had secured the services of an exceedingly intelligent and trustworthy agent, who kept him informed of every movement of the man he thought it necessary to watch until the papers were restored and Kate's final settlement should detach Hartley from all interest in either or any of the Cartaret possessions.

Hartley had not answered Carson's letters, but he had written to Dr. Carisbrooke (which the doctor characterized as a very manly and straightforward declaration), declining to answer letters from General Carson or Mr. Robert Carisbrooke "containing offensive threats and still more offensive suspicions." He offered, however, to meet Dr. Carisbrooke in New York during the coming May, and return to him the papers which Mrs. Hartley's trustee had demanded, provided Mrs. Hartley would relinquish all present or future rights in his estate.

Dr. Carisbrooke urged the acceptance of this proposition; and as Kate also insisted, Mr. Robert Carisbrooke consented and it was so arranged.

The waters in which Marten had gone down had cast no evidence ashore, and Carson con-

gratulated himself upon his discretion in keeping that secret. In truth, he had but few regrets for the "accident." He regarded it more as an indiscretion than a crime. Oscar had simply anticipated a decision which law would have given if law had cognition of the facts.

"It would have been well for the fellow to be hanged," Carson thought; but then he was content with the easier death, because the drowning left Hartley in ignorance of his familiar's fate.

CHAPTER XL.

"He next had the *grande passion*, and narrowly escaped marrying an heiress of great expectations and a countless number of châteaux."

CHRISTMAS at "The Cedars" was a dreary day. The Carsons were gone, and a messenger had come at daylight for Dr. and Mrs. Wilson. Mrs. Wilson's mother was very ill; of course they must go.

The doctor knew nothing of any danger threatening Rue, and Steenie seemed better since the house was so quiet. His only uneasiness was for his wife. The sudden ill news and the drive to town in a downpour of rain were serious trials to a delicate invalid. Rue assisted in the preparations for Mrs. Wilson's comfort; and when, as they were leaving, the doctor begged her to let him send some of her friends out from Richmond to stay until their return, she declined, saying:

"No, we are very well protected; and I could not ask any one to brave such weather unless there was some absolute necessity. Only think of Mrs. Wilson! We will do very well. I shall

send you news from here every day until you come home."

In the afternoon came a telegram from Bradnor saying he would "arrive at the station near 'The Cedars' on the late train from Washington."

Rue gave orders to Oscar to send to the station, and then went to tell the news to Steenie.

After searching the house she found her sister lying on a lounge before the library fire.

The girl's arms were crossed under her head, and the heavy mass of her loose hair brought into full relief the delicate, pale face and the thin, attenuated hands. Her eyes were fixed upon the portrait of her father over the chimney-piece. Something in the pose suggested hopeless suffering. Rue's eyes followed her sister's to the face of their father, and the thought of the day he brought the child to her in Philadelphia gave a strange significance to Steenie's attitude. "She will have no one but you, Rue; I know I can trust her to you, my daughter." The words were in her ears as she spoke to Steenie:

"Are you ill, little sister?"

As Rue touched her the girl buried her head in the clasped hands and clustering hair, which she

hastily drew over her face. Then, when Rue knelt beside her, she burst into long-drawn, shivering sobs.

"Steenie! my darling! can you not trust me? There is nothing I would not do for you, little sister—nothing." Steenie's arms were around her, and the sobs were pitiful gasps.

"O Steenie, Steenie, tell me! What can I do? Do you not know, do you not believe, that I love you better than any—than all the world? Our father gave you to me, little sister. You are mine—my own precious gift, the dearest care I have on earth. I promised our father that I would care for your happiness above all else. Will you not let me keep my promise, little sister? O Steenie! trust me. Believe me and trust in me. I would give you my life—but that is nothing to give—I would give you all that life is or that it can bring me to save you from pain or grief."

Rue was kneeling beside her sister, kissing her hair, her hands, her brow, when the door opened and Mammy Sara entered. "Go to the dining-room, Mammy Sara, and wait there."

"No! no!" gasped Steenie. "I want Mammy Sara. O Mammy! take me to my room." The negro woman lifted the girl to her feet, and,

holding her arms about her, led her from the room after giving a reproachful look to Rue, who stood silently aside to let them pass.

As the figures vanished behind the closing door Rue turned and looked long and steadily at her father's portrait. She was half interrogating the picture in her thoughts: "Why did she look so appealingly to you? Am I in fault? Is it anything I have done? Is there anything I can do?" She sank into the place Steenie had left, and tried with closest attention to go over the day—the past day—every incident in the weeks since Steenie returned from Cape May. Suddenly Stanislaus Carson's misunderstanding about Bradnor came to her recollection. "Could it be that? Could Stan have judged Steenie's heart more truly than I have done?"

There was fresh interruption. Mammy Sara came with a scrawl from Steenie:

"Dear sister, do not worry about me; I am only nervous and unreasonable. But I do wish to beg a favor. Please let me go to town to-morrow to the convent? The sisters will take me for a few weeks, and I am sure it will do me good. Please, sister, let me go, and do not notice my humors. Lovingly, STEENIE."

Rue looked up from the reading to Mammy Sara. Something she saw in her old nurse's face convinced her that Mammy Sara had the key to the mystery.

"Mammy, Steenie and I are your children. Since I lost my mother you are the only mother I have known. You know how I loved—how I still love and honor—my father's memory. You can and you must tell me what is grieving my sister. I promised him to care first for my sister."

"She's jes' breakin' her heart, an' I thought hard o' you, Miss Rue—I did, honey—'cause you oughtn't to have dat chile here whar Marse Bradnor is; if you's a-goin' to marry him she's jes' tryin' to die and get outen yo' way."

"Out of my way? I would give my life for her happiness."

"Yes, dat's jes' it; that's jes' whar de trouble is: she knows if you thought she loved Marse Bradnor you wouldn't marry him nohow. An' you see if you did dat, Miss Rue, you'd do mo' harm 'an good. You know how sens'tive Miss Steenie is, an' she loves him, Miss Rue, she does; but she loves you, and she'd die 'fore she'd take anything you wanted."

"But I do not want him, Mammy Sara. I am only keeping a promise to him because of his kindness to my father and because of my pledge."

"Yes, chile, I understan' you; and I understan' him better 'an bofe of you chillen could, an' I'm sorry he ever come to de place. If Miss Steenie had de fortune it would a-been her always—dat is, since she's growed up. She's a heap the prettiest—I don't mean to hurt yo' feelins, chile, but she is—an' dat man thinks a heap o' looks; he mighty proud o' his'n."

"Well, Mammy Sara, if she loves him she shall marry him, and have the fortune, too."

"Now, you see, Miss Rue, thar 'tis: dat's jes yo' way, an' dat's jes' the way to make it all wuss. You go fur to try to do dat, an' dat's de las' o' Miss Steenie. 'Fore God, I don't see no way outen dis trouble."

"Do not tell Steenie what you have told me."

"Lord! no, Miss Rue; I ain't gwine to tell her nothin'. And please, Miss Rue, whatever way you manages 'bout all dis troubl', don't tell I said it, Miss Rue. She's a-restin' now, an' you better leave her to me fur to-night."

"Tell her I will see her in the morning, or

sooner if she wishes to see me. To-morrow we will arrange for her to go to Richmond, if she still prefers that to something I have to propose to her; but I had better write it." She finished the few lines and dismissed Mammy Sara, who almost immediately returned with a message. Steenie would see her sister the next morning; she had taken a composing draught the doctor had left for her should she need it, and now was trying to go to sleep. With strict directions to Mammy Sara not to tell Steenie of Bradnor's expected arrival, the nurse was sent back to her charge.

At eleven o'clock that night Bradnor arrived.

Rue was waiting in the library. Their meetings and partings had always been ceremonious, never showing anything of the joy or the sweet pain of lovers.

To-night there was rather more of warmth in Rue's manner as she offered her hand and detained the servant to ask if he had dined.

"Yes, he had dined."

Then tea was brought and they were alone. The dialogue across the tea-things reminded Rue of the evening in the piazza with Stan, and her color deepened.

"I am glad you are here for Christmas. You

can assist me in settling something that I am anxious to do at once. You know that I insisted on postponing our marriage until Steenie should come of age."

"But she is not yet of age." There was so evident a plea for delay in the voice of her betrothed that Rue maliciously continued:

"She will be eighteen next year, and we are within a week of 1868. With your consent this can be arranged at once."

"What, our marriage?" The look of consternation was so real that Rue laughed.

"No; you can be easy there. We are not to be married ever."

He looked at her an astonished interrogation. She went on:

"This has all been a mistake."

"Not at all. You promised and I cannot release you. I am in no hurry—I mean I am willing to wait; but then in two years more I must be married."

"I know. You lose your inheritance if you are not married then; and you must marry a woman whose fortune equals the legacy your granduncle left you. It was three hundred thousand dollars, I believe?"

"Yes, three hundred thousand. But your fortune exceeds that, and so does mine now. I have taken good care of the money left me."

"If Steenie had three hundred thousand dollars would you not prefer Steenie?"

"It is useless asking such a question. I am engaged to you. Besides, Steenie has nothing but what you choose to give her."

"It is about that I wished to ask you."

"Oh! what to give her? Your estate is over half a million?"

"Yes, many thousands more."

"Then I think you could give her fifty thousand. That will be quite a generous gift."

"You think that generous. Then I am sorry for my sister. I fear you love money better than you love her."

"I am very fond of Steenie—" His manner changed. He looked about as if to avoid Rue's eyes. Taking up a magazine, he mechanically flapped the leaves as he continued: "Of course I am fond of Steenie; but your fortune is—"

"It is *mine now*, and I intend to settle three hundred thousand dollars upon Steenie."

"Why, that will be half of your estate. You have no right to give away half of your estate.

Three hundred thousand—why, that will take the Chicago property, which is increasing in value daily. I insist you do not sell the Chicago property."

"I will sell you what you like of the Chicago property at its present valuation, and I will give you a receipt for payment in full the day you marry Steenie."

"Marry Steenie?"

"Yes. You love Steenie; at least you love her as well as you love any one except yourself."

"I am sorry you think so, Rue."

"Oh! I have not been deceived in you—at least not since I came back to 'The Cedars' from Canada. It was the heiress you sought. I would have kept my word for the sake of your past kindness to my father; but there is now a more important question. It is not altogether because you prefer Steenie, but because Steenie loves you. She loves you, and she is the heiress. If three hundred thousand is not enough, name the *dot* you think I should give her. Some moments ago you thought fifty thousand sufficient."

"Which is hardly fair of you to say, Rue. You see there is a difference. I cannot marry

any one who has less than three hundred thousand dollars. I am restricted."

"Yes; and because of that restriction you wish the sum still larger. Well, win my sister's consent to marry you, and I will give you my note for four hundred thousand dollars that day."

"With the privilege of purchase of the Chicago property, as you suggested?"

"Yes, with that privilege." The contempt in her tone stung him at last.

"This transfer is your offer, not mine. I would have kept my engagement."

"Yes, because of the money. But I forgive you all that, and I am really glad to give this to Steenie. But I beg of you be kind and delicate with my sister. Leave all money questions out of your talk with her. Better say nothing to her of this gift. I would rather you did not."

It dawned upon him that it would be better every way to leave Steenie in ignorance of her riches. He would then have credit for disinterestedness and *entire control of the money*, which he would not have had in marrying Rue. He began to be glad and relieved at the break with Rue. Besides, he did prefer Steenie; and

he knew that he had gone beyond the point of discretion in his attention to her. Two or three people had asked him "which of the sisters was his *fiancée*." So now when Rue offered even a very small olive-branch he was glad to accept it, particularly as she added a condition that suited his views.

"I will not tell her of the gift you make, if you wish her not to know. It is very generous, Rue, and you have a right to command me in this. I give you my word of honor I will not tell her, and I do love her. You can trust me. I will do my best to make her happy."

"Unfortunately, her happiness makes the offer necessary."

He did not know what to say, because he did not altogether understand whether this was the expression of Rue's regret for her own loss or for her sister's need. His vanity persuaded him of Rue's regret; but there was enough doubt to keep him silent, and he had enough discretion to think this the moment to seize the one fact of change and establish his new position.

"I will make her happiness my study. But I trust to keep your friendship, Rue; for Steenie's sake we must be friends."

"Yes; we must, for Steenie's sake. Now I shall say good-night. To-morrow morning will you please tell Steenie I have broken our engagement? Tell her I discovered that it was a mutual mistake. Tell only that and wait. Do not ask her to marry you, or she will understand. Leave the future to me. I will tell you when you may ask her. I will think it out to-night."

The next morning when Steenie came to the library to find her sister she found Bradnor. Rue's directions were followed; he did not blunder in the telling: "They had discovered it was a mutual mistake." It still rained steadily. At dinner Bradnor and Rue talked and laughed like old friends. Steenie, watching, saw only the possible realization of her own happiness. In the afternoon Rue asked her to postpone the visit to Richmond; and Steenie, admitting that it was "frightful weather," consented.

That evening they all spent in the drawing-room together.

Rue was an admirable actress, and the play was well played. A lovely rose-tint had come to the pale cheeks of the younger sister. The next morning the sun came out and a gaily-plumaged little "Humming-bird" was whirling

about Pike's chair, pelting the giant with Christmas roses. That day they heard that Mrs. Wilson's mother was better.

Rue had another long talk with Bradnor, and two days afterward, in the evening, a clergyman who lived near came in answer to Rue's summons and stayed all night.

Colonel Bradnor was going to New York, but after breakfast Pike's chair was rolled into the library. Leszinksky's portrait was wreathed with flowers. Fronting the picture stood his daughters, and when the question was asked, "Who giveth this woman to this man?" Rue kissed her sister's hand as she laid it in the hand of Bradnor.

The only witnesses were Bob and Pike, and the two faithful negroes who regarded as their own these orphan children—the "last of the family."

The clergyman was a venerable old man who had known Rue's grandfather. More because he was persuaded by Rue's entreaties than convinced by her arguments he had consented to perform this ceremony, which was to be kept secret until Steenie was of age, when the public marriage service would be celebrated. Rue re-

garded this as only a solemn betrothal, and so Bradnor was pledged to regard it. At noon he left them.

That evening the Wilsons returned to "The Cedars."

Steenie's happiness was very quiet, but in the light of certainty it was very complete. Bradnor was not to return to "The Cedars" until spring, but she was to go to Philadelphia the last of January, and remain there under the care of Madame Detontville, not as a pupil, but as a young lady who was preparing to enter society. In the spring it was to be announced that she was engaged to Bradnor.

CHAPTER XLI.

Why do we wait? What passenger is tardy? Let us away!

We are off, and the team goes famously since that last crack of the coachman's whip.

Before we reach the first mile-post I remember we were waiting for "Hagar."

Stop! There is no need to touch the curb or put on the brakes; the colts are tired with this long journey. Even the sight of the wished-for goal, which we can see through the long reaches of the dusty highway just beyond that ghastly gibbet, does not tempt them from their willingness to wait.

While they fill their lungs with fresh strength and the foam drops from their panting sides we can look about us and see that all is taut and strong for the rush that is coming down the stony hillside, through the rocky valley, and up to the mount of crucifixion, where the nineteenth century defies the *Christ* as it pours its red libation upon the altar of revenge.

We have not long to wait.

See! from that by-path through the cool, dewy woods, where March winds have blown away the dead leaves which covered the sleeping violets, comes our name-giver.

The rosy feet of Atalanta were not more swift than those of this "Hagar" who is flying before the bent brows of Ate. She is here! Up and on!

Hurrah, my steeds! The journey will soon be ended.

(*Mrs. Carisbrooke to Mrs. Hartley from Rosebank, March* 30, 1868.)

"THIS wild March day must have touched my spleen, I am so out of sorts. I said as much to Carisbrooke this morning, at which his superior wisdom smiled. Under the

edge of the cold smile a sneer was so perceptible that I insisted upon his explaining to me the uses and abuses of the spleen. 'Tell it not in Gath,' my Kate, 'whisper it not in Askalon'; but, truthfully, he couldn't give the slightest pretence at a rational explanation of either its use or abuse.

"*And yet these men sneer us down, my dear, with the depth and breadth of their learning!* If I was twenty years younger I would study medicine and make a specialty of the spleen.

"But while I look out of my window at leaden clouds and the shaking of things in this blustering wind you are gathering roses under sunny skies. (Which rose-gathering, now I come to think of it, is a sentimentally silly figure of speech. I do not know just what one *may* gather in Havana in March, but I suspect the rose business is a blunder. I presume Carisbrooke would know; but after that spleen split I would see him hanged before I would go a-begging bits and shreds of information from his stock.) I *do* know that you have strawberries, which are surely more edifying to the stomach than mere uneatable and sweet-scented things.

"But this trifling is not the news-letter which I intended to write.

"I shall not answer your questions in the order in which they are asked, but as the answers fit into the narrative I am about to write.

"Carson returned from Texas the 25th of January, about a week after I last wrote you. Young Wild-Cat the half-breed had gone with his uncle, Young Wild-Cat the thoroughbred, on a visit to the Zuni Indians. Carson found a letter from him here when he returned with his malaria—the only thing he gathered on the banks of the Rio Grande.

"In February Rosebank was a better sort of private hospital. First Brooke had scarlet fever, then Daisy came near dying of it. Molly and I alternated in our care of Carson and Brooke.

"Lucy, or 'Hagar,' as you will name her, devoted herself to Daisy. Day and night she watched with her. The night we thought Daisy dying the anxiety and excitement brought on one of Lucy's insane attacks. You will know what a grief this is to us all, and what a disappointment, when we had hoped she was entirely cured. The violent period did not last long; but it was succeeded by one of those silent, desponding moods, and then by one of her old sudden disappearances. We hope she is with the O'Dowds;

but I never could understand from her just where the O'Dowds live—somewhere near some railway line, not far from New York and Philadelphia. But that direction is faint indication upon which to organize a search; yet, faint as it is, it is being followed.

"We had news from France before Lucy left Rosebank which we took great care to keep from her; but Brooke has such surprising ways of acquiring bits of knowledge, and of coming out with his possessions on the most unexpected and inauspicious occasions, that it is possible she did know of Julia's death, and may have heard something of the news from Mai.

"After six weeks of marriage the marquis is a widower! I have no doubt he is consoled by the *dot*, which was the objective motive. Poor Julia! I try to forget this last folly and remember the better things of the past.

"Mai owed her much. I trust during the few days of her aunt's illness Mai paid this debt of ancient kindness.

"Captain Hartley wrote Carisbrooke of Julia's death. In his letter he repeats the promise to meet my master in New York in May. To-day Carisbrooke has sent the letter on to Robert, who

will bring his wife, and I hope you also with them, to New York. I shall go with Carisbrooke, if Molly and the babies are all well.

"The news of the *duchesse* will keep until then.

"Now I come to the court calendar in earnest —to royal intelligence.

"The 'Princess' has been here!

"Princely imperiousness and moodiness grow upon her. I think the 'Voyvoda' pines for action.

"Her royal highness is dissatisfied with the uneventful life of these piping times of peace. Being that pitiable thing—a woman—she cannot rush into the turmoil of this bespattering reconstruction business. Yet the regular and methodical life of a Virginian country gentlewoman is just as little to the taste of the '*Palatiness*.' (She would never forgive me the double *s*.)

"What our 'Princess' *does* do you shall know. I drew it from her with discreet questioning. She shoots two hours, rides half-broken thoroughbreds four, and reads six (heavy reading, mark you). Oh! I had forgotten the principal diversion. Twice a week a celebrated fencing-master goes from Washington to 'The

Cedars.' With as much aplomb and coolness as if she were talking of music and arpeggios she said: 'I used to fence well when I was with the army, and I do not care to get altogether out of practice.'

"Carson sees in all this a praiseworthy continuance in well-doing!

"He says she is the most skilful fencer he ever saw, and he raves of her quickness of eye and touch with either rapier or pistol.

"Thank Heaven for Molly's plain, womanly sense! *She* will save my granddaughters from an education on the Palatine plan. But then one never knows. The remote ancestor may break out in time, may push himself into the present with all the vagaries of the dark or the middle ages. We are never safe from these reproductions.

"See these daughters of Stanislaus Leszinksky? They do not at all resemble each other, nor do they resemble their father.

"Steenie may be something like her mother; I rather think she is in the diplomatic way she has of getting all the good things she covets and in her affections, which are only spongy absorbents. My admirable son-in-law forgets the pro-

prieties and the commandments when he refers to the slow torture of Stanislaus Leszinksky's life with Steenie's mother.

"To tell my news of Steenie and have that off my memorandum of questions I will tell you now where she is. Why, at that lovely polishing shop of Madame Detontville's in Philadelphia—the school which gave the *duchesse* the finishing touches of pretty deceits and disgusted the 'Princess' with all approach thereunto. Its effect upon Steenie will be an interesting study.

"Rue has not a look of Margaret about her, nor, so far as I can see, any of her qualities. If there is any Saxon modification it has come from the hot-blooded Macdonalds, which has had no cooling or taming effect upon the kingly Polish current.

"Yet the 'Princess' has grand qualities of her own, but they are not all of the modern conventional Cartaret type, though even Margaret varied from that type.

"You Cartarets *are* conventionalists. You know it is true, Kate. That bugaboo the world has chained you for years to—I remember and I ask pardon; I promised you to say no more of that *mistake of yours*.

"To go back to the other Cartarets. Your father was a formalist in his ideas of women. He thought they should live, move, and have their being inside of fixed and narrowly-limited rules. Even Margaret's womanly independence—which was always subject to her affection—was a thorn to his conventionalism; as, in fact, it would have been to her own father.

"But Rue?

"Why, if old Colonel Tom could hear the crack of her pistol practice, or have a fearful vision of that French fencing-master and his foils at 'The Cedars,' he would 'revisit the glimpses of the moon' and speak his mind in those classic objurgations for which he was so celebrated when the occasion was great or urgent.

"But the Cartaret men were not singular in their womanology.

"Most Virginians—*the thinking males, bien entendu*—had, and yet have, badly-mixed ideas concerning the 'weaker sex' and the training needed to make them those composite constructions of angelical feminine excellences which the Virginian man is bound by tradition to admire. Their theories of women—if such vague wanderings of untethered thought can be called

theories—were made up of saws from Solomon and the sentimentalities of the Troubadours.

"Not that I object to this modern stealing from Solomon, but the Proverbs and the light philosophy of the gentle King René's singers are not the affinities a wise alchemist would put in the caldron were he compounding that subtle essence of perfection, a perfect woman.

"Moreover, the Virginian notions—they are too crude to be called aught else—are utterly unscientific; they force the butterfly—in other words, the Troubadouric young woman who is shrined where she can be sighed at and sung to—back into a grub.

"Music, poetry, and tender sentiment are the girl's nutriment; the lover's sighs are breathed into the pearly shells of sound until the rosebud mouth murmurs 'yes.'

"Then when the honeymoon has waxed and waned Cupid kisses his finger-tips and his mother's doves bear him away from the butterfly, who folds her wings as she creeps into the grub-cover and crawls through the daily routine of the 'saw' formula. And so the destructive process of this backward evolution goes on, or will go on until good comes out of evil.

"I am in the Cassandra vein, my Kate. The spirit of prophecy is upon me.

"The future and only possible restoration of the feminine grub to a more scientific and pleasing transition was assured by 'our *late unpleasantness.*'

"There will be protracted philanthropic and corrupt political effort to establish race-equality in the reunited States; but the quixotism of philanthropy and the greed of the politician cannot overturn the everlasting processes of Nature. Her scales are gradual and harmonious in adjustment.

"Woman is the melodic expression of race. Barbaric melodies are simple utterances. A perfect melody is the thought which governs harmonious expression.

"Do you see my climax, Kate? When races are finally adjusted with the dominant Caucasian in place, then that great she, NATURE, will crown the lesser she, WOMAN.

"I might have said it in fewer words, which would also have smacked of common sense. I will try it again.

"Every effort for change and for free thought is a lift, *after the mistakes are mended.* The

mistake of giving the uneducated and race-incapacitated negro political equality with the white man will right itself in proving the inequality of race and the equality of sex.

"You know, Kate, I am not an extremist—one reason may be the sticking quality of Virginian conservatism—but I do hope that change may follow close upon the heels of change, until the balance of sex is so adjusted that the moral influence of woman may be as effective in public affairs as her sympathetic tastes are now in social life.

"I am not an optimistic female-suffragist. I do not think that the political enfranchisement of woman would bring the millennium. But I believe it would save and rehabilitate hundreds of thousands who are now besotted and vicious destructives of themselves and of society. I believe it would do many things which all past civilization has failed to accomplish. I believe it would reform the drunkard in treating him as an irresponsible invalid and restraining him from the personal liberty which injures him, and from citizenship which injures others, until he is clothed and in his right mind. This in itself would be an immense step in the reformation of the law-making element.

"I have no doubt that men would be the first beneficiaries of sex-equality. The faithfulness, the devotion, the gratitude, the maternal instinct of woman would make that sure. Men would have early and full payment for the tardy justice given their sisters. But the benefits would all be retroactive.

"Behind every drunkard and every criminal there are women who suffer. Uplift the drunkard and the criminal and you release these unfortunates. I do not believe the wildest visionary can overestimate the moral force the world would gain through such an uplifting.

"Think of it, my Kate! It would make the modern Hagar impossible.

"Here I have been rushing into a discussion—following one of my vagaries, Carisbrooke would say—and leaving my news to crystallize. I will give you the broken remainder in condensed and highly cencentrated globules.

"*The 'Princess' has broken with Bradnor!!*

"Her determination to sell the Chicago and St. Louis property Robert has probably told you of, as his consent was given upon condition of Carson's consent. She fought this out with Carson and won. She wishes to settle the money on

Steenie. And for some mysterious reason which he will not tell, but which is to be explained in May after that settlement of yours, Carson was willing she should divide her fortune with her sister.

"Carson was so ill he could not go with Rue to St. Louis and Chicago, but he sent one of his aids as escort.

"That aid is an aspirant for royal favor, but he will come to grief.

"The 'Princess' is not matrimonially inclined.

"The 'Princess' brought Oscar with her, and then sent him to New York to find the O'Dowds and get news of Lucy. She also wrote to Dr. Wilson to send Stearns to meet Oscar and assist in the search for Lucy. They both knew the O'Dowds and have a certain intelligence as trailers. How they will succeed in a closely-settled country remains to be shown.

"Of course Carson and Rue have faith in frontier craft. Stearns is really very intelligent, and both the men are loyal and devoted to the 'Princess.'

"Rue promised to return here the first of next month. Now she writes as if doubtful: 'Chicago affairs are detaining her.'

"It seems Bradnor met her in Chicago!!

"I asked Carson if that meant re-engagement. He said 'No!' very decidedly, but would not explain.

"*I think I can guess the riddle, and that the answer is*, STEENIE!"

CHAPTER XLII.

"O world! so few the years we live,
Would that the life which thou dost give
Were life indeed!"

RUE'S stay in St. Louis was not long. The property there had been bought in her own right since her majority and its sale was easily effected.

But the Chicago affairs had gone badly.

First there was a personal matter which disturbed the "Princess." The inconsiderate aid obtruded sentiment, forgetting his position as business escort, and was immediately placed in the list of the rejected. To stay on in pain and awkwardness or to leave abruptly were the two horns of the dilemma. Bradnor's arrival was a fortunate excuse and release to the discomfited officer. He returned to Cincinnati, and Rue's good-fortune seemed to go with him. Mrs. Carisbrooke had sent her maid with Rue; and the detention, which she feared would inconvenience Mrs. Carisbrooke, was another worry.

In the business affairs were the vexatious delays and quibbles of the law. The written and attested consent of her trustees could not do away with certain technical objections to Rue's signature to sales of "the Cartaret estate" property. The finality of ownership was yet unsettled, and the balance of legal opinion was against the validity of title not executed by the trustees. The majority of counsel consulted held that if Rue died unmarried and childless even the accrued interest, invested by the trustees, would revert to the heirs named in Colonel Cartaret's will, although the firm acting for Bradnor, one of the shrewdest and most successful in the management of real estate, held a directly opposite opinion.

The imperious temper of the "Princess" ill brooked these daily discussions, and she was about to postpone it all until the next summer, when General Carson and Mr. Robert Carisbrooke could be present, when Bradnor proposed to buy the property directly from her, "*provided the doubt in the title was considered in the price.*"

With a royal look of contempt for his miserly prudence the "Princess" consented to sell him

all the Chicago property of the Cartaret estate for two hundred and fifty thousand dollars, which was less than half its actual value. She receipted for the payment of the Chicago property, and added one hundred thousand dollars from the St. Louis fund and her note for fifty thousand, thus completing the payment of the sum she had promised to give her sister.

After Rue's settlement with Bradnor she had a balance left from the St. Louis money which she had brought with her to Chicago of thirty thousand dollars in United States gold certificates. She declined to exchange them, as Bradnor suggested, for a check on New York.

All these transactions had intensified Rue's growing contempt and dislike for her young sister's husband. She had left him at his lawyer's rooms and walked from Madison Street to a bookseller's in State Street, where she bought some books and a small Russia-leather hand-satchel, which was to have her initials engraved upon the clasp and be sent to her at the Sherman House in an hour. In the little hallway of the ladies' entrance to the hotel she met Bradnor.

"I was waiting to see you, Rue. It is impos-

sible for me to go on to New York before to-morrow night. Do you mind waiting?"

"I mind it very much. In fact, I cannot wait. I am already two weeks late, and the Wilsons, I know, are impatient for my return. But that need make no difference to you. I will have to stop two days in New York, and I shall see you there."

"Then will you go on to-night?"

"Yes."

"But the train starts at eight o'clock; it is now half-past five."

"I shall be ready."

"Then you will not go by Cincinnati?"

"No; the maid I brought from Doctor Carisbrooke's would be unwilling to go to New York, and, besides, Mrs. Carisbrooke might be inconvenienced. She can go on to Cincinnati from Fort Wayne. From there I shall do quite well alone. I presume Oscar will be at the New York Hotel when I reach New York. I directed him to wait there, so I will have some one to look after the luggage."

"Very well; I will telegraph the New York Hotel people to send to meet your train. Shall I get you tickets by the Erie Road?"

"Yes."

It cost her an effort to accept even this slight courtesy, and she was glad to be free from his further presence.

She only half listened as Bradnor said: "You had better take the girl on with you to Crestline. She will then have no change to make between that and Cincinnati, and you will have her with you to-night."

"Very well; I would rather have her to-night."

"I wish you would wait."

"No; a short experience of self-dependence will do me good."

Bradnor started to make arrangements for her journey, and Rue went directly to her rooms, where the maid was waiting.

"We are going in two hours. You will be with me to-night, and you can go home from Crestline. Are you ready?"

"Yes, Miss Rue; everything is packed except this plain travelling-dress which I kept out. Is this the one you wanted?"

"Yes; it is loose and comfortable. We have one change to make, and I do not wish to undress. I can go through in this. O Mary! here

is a roll of notes I want to carry safely; my pocket might be picked, and it will not do to risk them in the luggage. What can you do?"

"I can easily sew them in the upper part of the facing of your dress, Miss Rue. The facing is stiff and heavy, and I can get a thin piece of muslin and lay the bills smooth in that, and then they will never show under the facing; the heavy plaits on the outside will hide them perfectly."

"Very well. Do not unpack to get the things needed; you can buy them at the little shop across the street."

Before Bradnor returned their preparations were complete and Rue and the maid had dined. They had still an hour to wait. Rue wrote to Steenie and to Carson. She had just directed the letters when the carriage was announced.

At Crestline the maid left Rue. She took a parcel to the Carisbrookes and the letter to Carson.

She remembered afterward every detail of the sleeping car in which she had arranged Miss Rue's travelling-shawls and packages. She knew the young lady had taken the two sections just opposite each other through to New York,

that she might not be annoyed by neighbors. The girl told that she had said laughingly:

"I shall have a sitting-room and a bedroom. I can change with the sunlight and will not be disturbed. Do not lose that parcel or yourself. Be sure you get on the right train."

"Yes, Miss Rue; I will get home all right with the parcels."

Mary always broke down in the next sentence: "I thanked her for her generous gifts and said good-by; and as the train left she looked from the window to see me go back to the waiting-room. The last word I heard was, 'You must come with Mrs. Carson next summer to "The Cedars."' "

The train rushed on eastward. At the station where they stopped for dinner the conductor came to Rue. "Yes," she preferred to get out. The conductor left her in the dining-room. He was called out by some one. Rue, feeling a little nervous in her new condition of "self-dependence," only drank a cup of coffee and hurried back to find her place.

A pale, delicate girl, whose worn but neat clothing told a story that touched Rue's sympathy, was walking on the long platform, halt-

ing with a tired, weary air to look in the different windows. Rue stopped. The chance to assist another strengthened her self-dependence.

"Have you lost your place? Can you not find the car?"

"I have no place yet, and I do not know where to find one. I am alone."

"So am I; come with me."

The look of thanks, the glad relief expressed in the sad face, increased Rue's interest in her new-found protégée.

"Where are you going?"

"To New York. My only brother is ill there in the hospital."

Just then they reached the sleeping-car; the girl hesitated.

"My ticket is not for a sleeping-car; I shall have to go back to one of the cars we have passed."

"No, you will not go back. I have a double section. I had a"—she caught back the word before it was uttered, and went on—"young girl with me from Chicago, but she got off this morning; you can have her place. I assure you it is no extra expense. I have taken these places

through to New York, and I will be very glad to have you come. It will be a favor to me."

The frank manner and the kind face decided the girl. In a few moments they were seated and the guest was made at home. Before evening the "Princess" had in her own thought adopted another inmate for "The Cedars."

The puzzle was just what position to offer the stranger, who, it was evident, was well brought up. It was just as evident that her health and hopes had been shattered in a long struggle with want.

In the evening Rue opened the luncheon-basket Mary had filled for her in Chicago. They had quite a merry little supper, and a faint color came into the pale cheeks. The delicately-cooked game, the white rolls, and the red Bordeaux were the medicines the invalid needed. Rue's resolution of adoption grew stronger.

After supper the outline of the story she wanted to hear was voluntarily told to her. Two orphan children had been left with a maiden aunt who taught in a village school on Long Island to win bread for herself and her dead sister's children. Then the boy got a place about the railroad station, and his little earnings helped. The aunt

broke down at her work and the young people were the care-takers. The brother was advanced gradually and transferred from time to time to different places. When the aunt died he was conductor on a freight-train running through from New York to Chicago. He brought his sister West, where she tried teaching, but it made her nervous and ill. Then she did what plain sewing she could get; her scant earnings helped pay for the extra expense of frequent illness. Her brother did all he could for her, but it was evident to Rue that to save him the girl had fought the battle alone as far as she could. Now it was the brother who was down—"malarial fever."

"The hospital nurse wrote me that day and night he talks of me. I had my aunt's watch, and that and some housekeeping things I sold brought enough to take me to New York; but you see I will not have much left, so I have to be economical."

The "Princess" thought with delight of that roll of gold certificates under her dress-plaits.

Then she told the story of *her* life and "its household cares" (Mrs. Carisbrooke would have thought that meant a target missed or a foil

broken); that her steward (Bob!!) "needed an assistant," and she wished a "housekeeper who would also be a companion," adding with a smile:

"But we will talk of all that in New York with your brother. I have a severe headache and you are tired. I intend to order you to bed."

"Let me brush your hair. My aunt used to say my fingers were magnetic; possibly I can relieve your headache."

To please her Rue consented. The girl brushed the heavy masses of hair, and then softly pressed Rue's throbbing temples with her cool hands.

"There," said Rue, "thank you, my head is better; now you must go to bed."

The porter came to arrange the couch. Rue had her guest's made up, but preferred her own as it was. She could not sleep, and she wanted to open the window if she should feel faint. She had been liberal in her gratuities, and the porter said he would come later and arrange the couch if it was wanted.

Rue was sitting by the window when the train stopped at Binghamton. When the door near her opened she heard a familiar voice talking

with the porter, and the old clergyman, her neighbor at "The Cedars," entered. There was a warm hand-shaking, a few inquiries, Rue's short explanation of her delay at Chicago, and the rector's explanation of his unexpected visit to Binghamton to see an old parishioner. He had been in Philadelphia on some church business, and "could not refuse to make this detour to see his friend on his way to New York." Then, with good-nights and the expectation of further talk in the morning, they parted.

This unexpected meeting did not help Rue to quiet rest. It brought back her rash decision and the regrets that were beginning to haunt her. "Had she done well to give Steenie to Bradnor? She was such a mere child she might have outgrown her first love." Then Rue thought with terror of the possibilities of Steenie's future disenchantment in this love-match. "Have I only ruined her life in my overhaste to make her happy? And is not this concealment of the marriage and her separation from her husband still more dangerous? Would it not have been better to have told General Carson and the Carisbrookes? If Steenie"—but she dared not think of the possibility of Steenie's love changing.

Rue's temples were throbbing and hot, and she got up to go to the dressing-room and bathe her face and head. As she was leaving her seat her guest called:

"Are you ill? Can I do anything for you?"

"Yes," said Rue. "You can take care of these things for me. It is somewhat of a risk to leave them on the seat. I am going to bathe my forehead. I have great faith in the water-cure."

And Rue put the satchel she had bought in Chicago in the girl's berth. She had taken off her watch to put in it, but there was some difficulty with the clasp, and she thrust it under her guest's pillow, saying, as she took off her rings and gave them to her to keep:

"I shall not have the trouble of drying them. Do not try to keep awake. I may go to the door and see what fresh, unpoisoned air will do. It is fearfully close here, and the old lady next me begged me to close my window."

"I am so sorry for your head, and so sorry I can do nothing for you when you have been so kind, so good to me!"

And the sensitive mouth trembled, and the soft blue eyes swam in misty light as they looked in the face which was bending down above them.

Rue kissed the tender eyes and whispered softly :

"Sleep now. To-morrow I will go with you to your brother. A fairy has told me that your troubles are nearly ended. Sleep and be happy !"

After bathing her face Rue wrapped about her a light shawl she had taken from the package Mary had strapped together, and opened the door.

It was the rear car, and the brakeman had gone forward. Afraid of fresh complaint of the draught, she stepped out on the platform and pulled the door shut behind her.

The damp night air—it was raining a sleety, drizzly rain—chilled her. She had been holding to the iron rail ; as she let go to turn to the door behind her the car rocked violently to one side and threw her on the steps. She caught at the railing—missing it, she fell from the car. It was her last moment of consciousness. The rebound sent her over the edge of the low embankment, and she rolled down the muddy declivity into a rough country road, striking heavily against the jagged top of a low stump, which threw her back a little to one side.

The accident to Rue was only the prelude to

one not yet forgotten. At Carr's Rock the train went over a high embankment. Fire and water fought each other for the victims who were fastened in and under the wreck. It was hours before help came to them.

The screams of agony from the sleeping-car were hushed before the flames were extinguished.

A few of the charred dead were recognized by their friends. The "parishioner from Binghamton" found the remains of his old pastor. The baggage of Miss Leszinksky was on the train, and after the day's search was over a charred skeleton with three rings on the burnt fingers was found alone in a section. Beneath the disfigured corpse a watch and chain were almost fused by the heat, but when forced open the watch had the letters "R. L." beneath the arms of Poland. The rings had the same initials. In a pool of water beneath the car a Russia-leather satchel was discovered. It contained papers and memoranda not entirely destroyed belonging to Miss Leszinksky.

CHAPTER XLIII.

"The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
Make instruments to scourge us."

IT was a rugged, barren hill not many miles from where that disaster occurred at Carr's Rock. Here and there patches were sparsely scattered of dark hemlock and stunted bushes of glossy-leaved laurels.

In some few hollows to the south hardy grasses had matted their roots and covered the thin soil with the long strips of tender, delicate green which proved that Spring had gone northward. She had but touched the rocky ridge; but down in the valleys between the hills and in the meadows by the river the vegetation said that May had come.

On this high summit, which commanded a view of the distant stretches of the twisted chain of hills belonging to the three different States through which the Delaware carries its waters to the bay, one could only feel the warm breath of May as it blew the rifted clouds eastward.

It was still early morning. On the very topmost point of the hill, near where three dwarfed hemlocks held together, somewhat sheltered by a huge rock which had defended the young trees from the strong northwest winds until their branches were tall enough to look over their protector, Oscar was lying, watching the railway station he could see in the river valley.

The negro looked worn with grief and fatigue. In his face a hopeless despair was lit by occasional flashes of fierce rage.

He had in his hand field-glasses, which he turned from the station to the long, curving railway track, and from time to time to the Port Jervis road on the ridge beneath.

Suddenly he heard behind him the fall of stones loosened by feet which were climbing the hillside. He sprang up and walked rapidly downward to meet the climber.

"O Marse Bob! I begun to be afeard you wahn't ever a-gwine to come. I thought may be—" He stopped abruptly.

"You thought may be I was drunk?" Stearns paused a moment, but as Oscar made no reply he continued: "And you'd a-thought right, if it hadn't a-been fur one thing: jus' when I was

a-gettin' a good start fur it I seen Captain Hartley."

The negro threw up his hand with a hoarse bellow of rage.

"Keep still, Oscar. You jus' keep your balance, and this time we'll git him. He's always had the whip-hand on us befo' ; but to-day he'll lose the full he's a-bettin' on. The devil's got pressin' bizness on hand somewhars else, and he ain't a-lookin' arfter his pet. I'll rest here fur ten minutes and tell you whar I met up with him. Then we must be off. Set down, Oscar, or I won't say anuther word. Set down, I tell you! You'll want all the strength that's in you fur the walk that's a-comin', and may be a fight arfter we find out what he's a-doin'."

The negro sat down and Stearns began:

"Well, you see, I got to New York befo' nine o'clock yesteddy mornin', and I told General Carson that we'd jus' circled 'round and 'round Port Jervis and found nothin' of Lucy or the O'Dowds. And I asked him if he had hearn anything. But he hadn't, excep' that Capin Hartley was somewhar about New York.

"General Carson thought may be I'd better stop once mo' at Port Jervis and see that detec-

tive he's got thar. Now, I ain't never b'lieved in that feller no way—an eddicated cuss that's been two weeks a-lookin' fur the O'Dowds, arfter Mrs. Carson done sent him the name of that drug-man in Port Jervis what put his sign and the town on the bottle of cam*phire* and the little box that was in Lucy's room. I wonder what the Big Chief would a-thought of such a trailer? Why, he'd lose hisself an' find nobody, if he was on a war-path; and that's what this is like to be.

"Well, I asked him like the general told me, and he hadn't got a bit furder in the bizness than he was befo' the trouble 'bout Cap'n Rue; then, you know—well, that week I got drunk.

"Onless Mrs. Leszinksky had a-come down herself all the angels in heaven couldn't a-held me sober when I saw them cars and what was left of the little baby I had helped save from the flood and the Injuns.

"But I mustn't think o' her like that when this villain's to trap, else I'll get off agin. You see when Cap'n Rue died my pledge-time was up. That was the time I promised fur. I swore that as long as a Leszinksky lived that keered fur me to quit liquor I'd quit. An' she was the

last—the last that keered; fur Miss Steenie's married, and she ain't like a Leszinksky nohow. *She* wouldn't keer if I etarnally stayed drunk.

"I suppose, anyway, I would a-got sober on and off. I'd a-had to, if the devils had a-got me like they did in the Injun country. But I would a-gone at the bizness systematic, if General Carson hadn't a-got it in his head, and a-put it in mine and yourn, that Hartley had a hand in this devil's work here at Carr's Rock. *You* wahn't hard of b'lievin'. I don't know as you or the general would a-thought o' this if you hadn't hearn that young Mr. Stan saved that scoundrel of a Marten from drownin' the time you throwed him in the river.

"That was what made General Carson think Marten and Marten's master was at the bottom o' this.

"But my ten minutes is 'most up and I ain't finished my story. I must hurry it. The detective hadn't l'arnt anything. So I went to that tavern thar by the railroad in Port Jervis, you know, where we stayed when we went to see all that was lef' us of Cap'n Rue. And like as not—fur I was disapp'inted and bothered—I'd a-been cl'ar drunk to-day; but jus' as I was a-thinkin'

I couldn't do nothin' and would take a drink I saw Hartley ridin' out this way.

"I know'd him in a minute. He ain't got over the dragoon way o' ridin'—none of 'em ever does. More 'an that, I could tell that sneerin', hooked nose of his in a million.

"Thar was a country feller at the tavern jus' gettin' in his buggy to come out a piece this way. I paid him five dollars to bring me and follow the man I was arfter. I told him 'twas a man what owed me somethin', and I told the truth. I'm a-goin' to git my pay now.

"Hartley rode fast, and we arfter him as fast as we could. I meant to keep him in sight till I got close by here—I know'd you would be a-watchin' here—and then I meant to come fur you—"

"I'm ready, Marse Bob. Whar is he?"

"Befo' I tell you, you mus' make me a promise."

"I'm a-gwine to kill him, Marse Bob. When I lets him loose he won't live over it like Marten did. If the Lord 'ill only d'liver him into my han's onct I never will let him go out ov 'em alive."

"Now, you see, Oscar, that's jus' whar you always was a fool. *You* ain't in God a-Mighty's

secrets. He ain't a-keepin' folks to d'liver 'em into your hands. When he gets through with a rascal—and I'm free to say he handles a good many of 'em—he's got a place fur 'em and a special jailer of his own. Leastways 'most on the church folks do so b'lieve, 'cep' Pike.

"Pike's allus willin' to let a sinner go in on God's marcy. He ain't mean or stingy with Kingdom-come. He b'lieves in free givin', and he lives up to what he b'lieves.

"But to come back to what we was a-sayin'. Now, if you're a-goin' to rush in and do the devil's bizness I ain't a-goin' to tell you whar the job is a-waitin'. So you'll jus' make me let that scoundrel off agin."

"Marse Bob, I can't make no blin' promise 'bout that man. He's done me harm 'nough. And 'ithout talkin' o' me, thar's Lucy's 'count with him waitin'. Marse Carson b'lieves and I b'lieve he had somethin' to do with that broke rail on the track thar whar Miss Rue was killed. I'll tell you the truth, Marse Bob—I'm a-goin' to kill him."

The negro's eyes were ablaze, and the last sentence seemed to escape unconsciously through his shut teeth.

"Well, go and find him!" said Bob, and he threw himself full length upon the ground, as if he meant to stay there. Oscar looked about uneasily. He watched the road with quick glances, varied by an occasional appealing look at the impassive Stearns. At last he said:

"What do you want me to promise, Marse Bob?"

Bob rose up slowly and brushed off the hemlock leaves that were sticking in his clothing; then he turned to Oscar.

"Now you're a-comin' to your senses agin'. You mus' promise me not to kill Cap'n Hartley, 'less we get in a fight whar we're a-goin', and I say to you that we must take him alive or kill him. You see if I ketch him sich a way that I've got the drap on him—the proof General Carson wants—why, then *I'll keep him or kill him.* He sha'n't git away then; and somehow I count on findin' him and Marten, and proofs o' what they've been a-doin'. But if I don't see cl'ar the right on it, and if I say to you that he's to go back scot-free, why, you mus' promise to let him go."

Bob rested his appeal; the negro still hesi-

tated. More hopeful from Oscar's silence, Bob commenced anew:

"You see, Oscar, we *mus*' have proofs. General Carson's a-waitin' in New York for Hartley, and he's in as big a stew as you is to get some 'scuse to fight the villain if we can't hang him. But all that's a-wantin' is proofs; and if you'll do like I say, why, we'll get 'em and hang him, which I'm free to say is a mean, unsoldier-like way to finish a man. But then this scoundrel ain't no better 'n a dog."

"It's hard, Marse Bob—hard, but I promise."

"You sw'ar you won't kill him 'cep' I tell you. Mind, I leaves you free from your promise if we finds him in some villany whar he mus' be took or let go. You sw'ar?"

"Yes, Marse Bob, I sw'ar by the Lord's vengeance I won't touch him 'cep' you tell me."

Bob held out his hand, which Oscar clasped.

"Now, Oscar, we're all right. I can 'pend on your word, which is mo' 'an I'd say fur some white folks. Now I'll tell you the balance of my findin's. Cap'n Hartley stayed at that tavern down thar all night." He pointed to a house in the distance. "I'd a-come fur you in the night, but I was 'fraid may be Marten would come and

they'd be off while I was away. So I stayed about in the yard, and in the kitchen, and then in the stable. The little sleep I got I took listenin'.

"I crep' up to the porch whar Hartley was a-talkin' with the landlord jus' 'fore he went to bed. I tell you it giv' me a start all over when I heard him ask the landlord 'if he knew any Irish folks up in the ridge above thar named O'Dowd.' And the landlord said yes, and told him whar-'bouts the place was and how to go.

"When daylight come and Marten hadn't I know'd I must be off. Hartley hadn't moved—I had been a-watchin' his room. The people was jus' gettin' up when I lef' thar. It's a pretty good walk, fur I come 'round through the woods the way the landlord told Hartley to go. I wanted to see which way he was a-goin'. It was a good thing I did. I know now how we can cross the ridge here and get thar befo' he does. I ain't a-goin' in till he comes. I don't want to skeer off whoever is a-waitin' fur him; mos' like it's Marten. We must take the p'ints of the place and get close up. He ain't started yet. They was a-goin' to feed his horse and he'll mos' like eat his breakfast. Now we'll be off."

Bob had got his bearing, and an hour's fast

walk brought them in sight of the place. They had gone through woods and fields until they could see the old house. Then they crossed the road by which Hartley must come. In the road they met a countryman driving a wagon down toward the tavern. Bob questioned him. "Yes, the O'Dowds live about a mile and a half away; go the straight road—not this; that to the right there—until you pass a bridge over a branch, and then right along by the railroad track, and you'll see where to turn up the hill to the house."

They walked on a short distance until the man was out of sight, and then they climbed the fence and went up the ridge so that they could not be seen from the road. They soon came upon a path which led them to a wooded hill behind the house. There was only a shelving ravine to cross, in which they would be sheltered by thick masses of laurel which screened the path from sight. Before they descended into the ravine Bob took the field-glass and inspected the house.

"Yes, Oscar, we're all right; we've come in right behind the place. We can get close up to that chimney thar 'ithout seein' anybody. Hartley's got to come 'round by the railroad and up the hill in front. You must watch fur him thar at

the corner of the house whar the fence begins, while I crawl through them low bushes and see if thar's anybody in that old shed or if we can get in. It's a mighty good thing fur us thar ain't no winders this side of the house. Now, don't make no noise in the bushes. Go up by the chimney. You can get 'round to the corner by the fence arfterwards."

They cautiously went down the ravine, and still more slowly and silently climbed up to the spot Bob had selected. The path which they had quitted led around an old tumble-down shed to the left.

The chimney was nearer the corner to the right where Oscar was to be stationed.

Bob motioned to Oscar to stop, and crept past the negro to the fence. He had thought of an unconsidered possibility. Hartley might not have waited for breakfast, and he might be there.

At the corner of the house he could not see the front yard. He went a little farther and was climbing upon the fence when he saw a horse hitched at the post down the hill. Suddenly there was the sound of a shot in the house, of a woman's shriek, and the duller noise of a heavy

fall. Bob sprang over the fence as he called "Oscar," and then rushed around to the door. At the same instant a woman with a shawl about her head ran around in the opposite direction from which Bob was coming and behind the shed. Before Bob was on the steps Oscar had overtaken him. Bob pushed back the door, which the flying woman had left partly open.

The men stopped motionless as if they had seen a ghost.

In a low bed in one corner of the room a woman had thrown back the covers and was sitting upright.

She had a pistol in her hand and was looking down at a man lying motionless on the floor.

The room had no furniture except this roughly-made couch, an unpainted table, and two or three chairs. There were a few chips burning on the hearth.

Between the fireplace and the bed was a strip of woollen carpeting. On that the man was lying.

Bob and Oscar had recognized the woman at the first glance.

It was Rue.

The man was Hartley, and he was shot through the head.

CHAPTER XLIV.

Twelve just men sat in judgment upon a sinner and committed murder.

THE personality of those in authority must be dealt with discreetly, so I shall not say in which of the three States already indicated this scene was acted.

It was a hot, breezeless day the first week in June. The court-room of the little country town was crowded. This was the third day of the trial of the man who had been apprehended for the murder of Captain Hartley.

The defence had been admirably conducted, but from first to last they fought a losing fight. Every point of evidence was against the prisoner at the bar. Even his character as proved by the defence warranted belief in the possibility of his having committed the crime with which he was charged. General Carson, a witness for the defence, had to admit in the cross-examination "that the prisoner was quarrelsome, and even dangerous, when he had been drinking." And

the testimony of the witnesses for the prosecution left no doubt that he had been drinking hard two weeks before the murder.

The prosecution in the summing-up dwelt upon the facts proved. They repeated the statement that "the prisoner at the bar was taken red-handed in the commission of the crime." They insisted that—

"Not a link has failed in the chain of evidence. Every witness called by the defence has helped to unravel the motive of the crime and fasten the guilt upon the accused. Motive and opportunity are proved, and the murderer was arrested as he was disposing of the body of his victim. It is possible that an accessory escaped, but that is immaterial to the conviction of the prisoner. He came alone from New York to Port Jervis. He was at the station when Captain Hartley arrived. He seemed to be sure of the coming of his victim. He watched for him, then he followed him. He told the witness who drove with him from Port Jervis to the 'Valley Tavern' that 'the man he was following owed him a debt which he intended to force him to pay.' In one sense the threatening words were true. It was the debt of revenge the prisoner at the bar intended to collect. That

was proved in the testimony of the gallant officer who has so reluctantly told the story of the prisoner's old grudge against an officer who had punished him for drunkenness. But the most damning evidence is that of the witness who went with him from Port Jervis: '*He did not want to overtake the man we were following; he said he only wanted to keep him in sight; and when we saw him dismount at the tavern the prisoner paid me and sent me back, saying "he would walk on to the house after it grew darker."*'

"Then we have the testimony of the landlord and of his sons. They could not induce the prisoner to come into the house to his supper. He ate it and paid for it out in the yard. One of the boys saw him walk around the house and lean against the porch railing, where he could hear the landlord giving directions to Captain Hartley as to the route he was to take going to O'Dowd's. The prisoner had known the O'Dowds in the West, and it is certain he knew where they lived, for the next witness is the one who met him in the road the next morning—the morning Captain Hartley was last seen alive—not two miles from O'Dowd's and not two hundred yards from where he murdered Captain Hartley, and

where he was arrested the next day: a secluded, secret spot, fit scene of crime, where he was replanting the laurel beneath which he had hidden his victim. The negro whom the witness saw with him may have been an accomplice, but that does not lessen the guilt of the man we have traced step by step to the scene of the murder.

"But there, at the grave into which the coffinless corpse was hurriedly thrown, a watchful Providence gives a final attestation of the prisoner's guilt. The last proof—the evidence which fastens the deed upon the murderer—is furnished at that supreme moment by the prisoner himself. He resisted arrest, and when overpowered and searched a recently-discharged pistol is found upon him. Skilled experts tell us the ball taken from the brain of the victim was shot from that derringer—shot by some one close behind the man he murdered. The scorched and bloodless wound was made by an unseen enemy. Gentlemen of the jury, if the act had been committed in the presence of witnesses the evidence could not have been more clear and conclusive, but the crime would have been less. It would not then have been a cold-blooded assassination."

During the summing-up of the prosecution the

prisoner had followed the argument with constant, unwearied attention; yet in the interest which he exhibited there seemed no personal solicitude. It was as if he were listening to a puzzle addressed to others, to a riddle which they must guess. Once or twice there was a triumphant glance in the reddish-brown eyes as the prosecutor fixed the attention of the jury with the perfectness of the cumulative evidence. It was as if he won a victory in the very exhibition of the proofs which were likely to convict him.

Two or three times during the trial, at some queer expression of one of the frightened countrymen, who were badgered into self-contradiction and plucked of the truths they unconsciously withheld, Bob laughed outright. It was a rolling, full, mellow, infectious laugh, and called always a hearty, responsive echo from the audience, who would laugh with him and then look at him in half-surprised and half-stolid amazement, wondering how a man could laugh at words which struck at his life.

Ah! they did not know that the last heavy heartache of Bob's life ended when he found that "Capin Rue" had not died in that horrible furnace.

Still less could they understand that his anxiety for her further safety was quieted by his own danger.

Carson and Pike, who had come as soon as they knew of his arrest to do all they could to save or to console him, did not know how to read Bob's newly-recovered brightness. For not even to Carson or Pike had he told the story of Rue's escape.

Poor Bob had very clouded ideas of law and justice. He knew a man could only once be put in peril of his life by his trial on a criminal accusation, and through some twist of reasoning he believed that when law once found a victim and condemned him law was satisfied with the forfeit the victim paid.

Believing this, the vindictive eloquence of the prosecutor was a positive delight to Bob. After one of the most bitterly accusative bursts of that zealous official he was somewhat startled by the prisoner's look of serene content.

From the day of his incarceration in the jail Stearns had refused to utter a word of explanation in his own defence. At the moment of his arrest he had knocked down a constable. But when he heard a bystander say, "Let us help

the officer; the proof is plain this man has committed a murder," Bob's humor instantly changed from rage to gentleness. After that instant his only fear was that Oscar, hearing of his danger, would return, and then the fact that Rue was living and that she had killed Hartley would be known. He had risked life to save her more than once. Why should he hesitate now? He had an instinctive horror of hanging; but then, he asked himself, what was his hanging to her danger?

He had been one of that military guard in Washington just after the war when a woman was hung—a woman upon whom only the shadow of a crime was thrown; a woman believed to be innocent at the time, and afterwards proved to have been innocent. Night and day for the few weeks before his trial Bob thought of that horrible execution—hurried on to appease a vengeful cry which only hushed after the hangman tied his fatal knot about the throat of the condemned. He remembered the woman's pallid face with its crown of gray hair, and how the assistants had lifted the limp, trembling body and carried her, already dying, to the gallows.

Yes; why should he not laugh and be glad as this trial went on?

The child of the dearest friends he had ever known, the child he loved with all the devotion and singleness of heart which characterized his simple, faithful nature, would be saved through his conviction.

What mattered his death, if it purchased a dearer life? Why, if he had a hundred lives he would have given them all that a Leszinksky might not be held up to the world as a criminal!

The advocate Carson had engaged to defend Bob had a wide experience of criminal cases and of criminals. Yet his experience did not help him to understand his client. Where his experience failed his sympathies enlightened him.

He happened to look at Bob when he was about to close his argument. It was as if a lightning flash had brought into the inky darkness the splendor of its rapid revelation. He knew that which he saw, and knew also that his doubts had been leading him to the truth, else he would not have found it in that instantaneous exchange of glances.

"The prisoner at the bar is a voluntary victim; he is sheltering some one else from sus-

picion." The pause in his speech, the conviction of the truth, was so sudden that it was wonderful the advocate did not say his thought aloud.

The admirable training of his profession helped him through this upsetting of all his previous beliefs and gave him ready control of himself. With a slight cough he turned to the table and waited a few minutes while pouring out and affecting to drink a glass of water.

The pause was long enough. Until now the lawyer had fought for acquittal. But now he must fight to introduce DOUBT into the jury-box. It was his forlorn hope. He would no longer try to attack but to undermine the circumstantial evidence.

It was a long and masterly argument. Case after case was cited to prove how honest witnesses had sworn away lives; how sight and hearing may deceive; and how the most natural and simple action may be put in such a false light that it takes the very complexion and hue of guilt. Every glance at his client as he reviewed the mistakes of the law gave him stronger assurance of his innocence.

Then the advocate threw away quibbles and addressed himself to conscience and to the hu-

manity that is in man. His feelings nerved his zeal as his own reasoning made him understand that the calculating, murderous vengeance of law which arrogates God's right in the life or death of his creatures is a greater crime than the rash deed of blind, unreasoning passion. As he enunciated this truth, which the nineteenth century barbarously denies in every elevation of the gibbet, he watched his client and saw that it struck his intelligence and his heart, but he being guiltless, it did not strike his conscience. Bob believed with him ; for Bob was to himself an illustration of one of the law's mistakes. So he listened with a growing and awed understanding of the greater wrong it has done in its usurpation of an awful function which belongs to Omniscience.

The advocate was no longer a mere expounder of human law while he defended a man accused of a crime. He was the champion of eternal truth and of divine mercy. The effect upon the audience was that which truth, feelingly presented, always has. Women wept and men shaded their faces from the inquisitive light as the earnest orator in his closing sentences urged the terrible responsibility of taking a man's life

without more direct proof, and brought to every softened heart the possibility of mistake:

"Not an eye saw the murder. Not a witness can swear that this is the man. I acknowledge that there is around him a curious twisting of misleading circumstances. But in the cases cited you see how false and how fatal was such evidence. Turn from those accusing circumstances to the man himself. Look at the prisoner! You see an honest, frank, soldierly face, furrowed by time, weather-beaten, and marked by many wars; for he has grown old in the service of his country. For over thirty years he was a scout, tried, fearless, true—a soldier, loyal, courageous, and merciful. You have heard his officers and his comrade describe him. General Carson, whose deeds have made you familiar with the name which is written in many a glorious page of his country's history, has testified to the character of the prisoner at the bar. You heard the words: 'I have never known a more faithful or braver soldier, never a bolder or more truthful and honest man. His devotion to the child of an officer who was stolen by the Indians words would but faintly express. When the regiment was forced back by a disastrous fight he followed her into the

heart of the Comanche country, and through his coolness and unflinching resolution she was restored to her friends.' Then his colonel told us the history of the accused as he knew it, and of his behavior in the late war: 'He was a sober, reliable sergeant; if he had been an educated man his promotion would have been sure and rapid. He was obedient to orders and fearless in battle. At Bull Run he saved the regimental colors. At Ball's Bluff, where my horse was shot under me and I was severely wounded, he came to my rescue. He found me a remount, and, swimming by my side, brought me safely across the river.'

"And to reward such a life of service the prosecution asks you to convict this man!

"Strangle him! because he saved your country's flag upon a lost battle-field.

"Hang him! for that daring rescue, for his gallant passage of that bloody and fatal river.

"You have heard his comrade, that crippled missionary to the Indians, himself the bravest of the brave, tell the story of their life on the plains—of 'perilous ventures and of dangers shared,' of mischances by flood and field, and of that most desperate venture of all when the

prisoner, with a few friendly Indians, rode into the Comanche village and saved the life of his friend when he was already burning at the stake. Do you believe a man who dared such odds would stealthily assassinate an unwarned and solitary traveller?

"But the prosecution, to destroy the effect of the character of this man as it has been proved, tells you: 'He was drinking.' If that is true—but it is not—you are asked to hang him because law gave the liquor-dealer a license to poison a man's brain and destroy his consciousness of right and wrong—to prepare him for the commission of a crime for which law afterwards holds him responsible. This may be law, but is it justice?

"If you do this evil thing you are asked to do; if you send this brave, gallant, innocent man to the gallows—for I swear to you I believe him innocent of this murder; if you take it upon your consciences to say he is guilty because he is tied by the threads of accident; if you consent to 'the deep damnation of his taking off,' do you not dread the Nemesis who stalks the steps of the wilful shedder of innocent blood?

"You know that which you do. There is no

excuse, even of drunkenness, for your sentence. You are to be cool, observing, dispassionate. You are to do justice and show mercy, not to give a victim to the Thugs of injustice.

"You are not as gods. You cannot read the past nor can you foretell the future. The real murderer may crouch in this court-room unseen by you. Conscience may finally bring him to a confession which will convict *you* of the death of the innocent, or he may walk scathless in the sunlight for long years after you have dug the grave of the guiltless victim of error. But your doubts will haunt you day after day and night after night.

"Once again I ask you, Look in that face! The prisoner at the bar may, in that unselfish, superb devotion of which we have heard that he is capable, be sheltering a friend by his silence; but I know he is not the murderer.

"Circumstances are the veriest liars, but the soul writes in unmistakable characters upon the faces of men. Can you look upon that face and believe it to be the face of an assassin? It is a face sensitive to praise but fearless of assault. I have watched it closely during this trial, and I have seen that it was as trusting and open, as free

from revenge and murderous intent, as the face of a little child. I beg of you for your own sakes distrust circumstances. What assurance have you that the child you love, the nursling upon your wife's breast, the boy who looks at you with clear, honest eyes, may not be choked by circumstance for the sin committed by another?

"Can you convict this man—who braved danger, and captivity, and torture, and death to save a little child—and feel that your conscience is clear of crime? When you kiss the smiling lips of the little daughter who comes to meet you when this trial is ended, will you not remember the measure of reward you have meted here to a child-saver?

"What news of good or evil will you tell your wife? Will you tell the brave deeds of this soldier to the boy who laughs with joy as he shouts, 'Father'?"

From the first the advocate had the sympathy of the audience. He had touched the hearts of some of the jurors. But there were others in the jury-box, professing Christians, ready to give the lie to the promptings of humanity and the teaching of Christ—men who would rigidly exact a

"tooth for a tooth and an eye for an eye," and if they were blinded by their own loss were ready to clutch at the nearest and cry: "This is he that did it."

Another thing against the prisoner was the after summing-up of the prosecution (the last words of which I have already given). It was deadly to the defence, for the merciful scruples of the few were soon talked away. With the ordinary juryman the last speaker has an immense advantage; and law, in thus shutting off the defence, prearranges the conviction of the accused.

The judge was a hanging judge. His charge was short and leaned, as far as a charge decently could, toward conviction. He was anxious for the jury to be instantly agreed. He was in haste to go to his son's wedding.

At four o'clock the jury retired. At five the weak had succumbed.

The verdict was—*Guilty!*

In his indecorous haste the judge was sparing of words. He sentenced the prisoner "to be hanged by the neck until he was dead" on the first Friday in the next month.

CHAPTER XLV.

"Woe unto us! for the day goeth away, for the shadows of the evening are stretched out, . . . and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely. They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace. . . . For I have heard a voice as of a woman in travail, and the anguish as of her that bringeth forth her first child, . . . saying, Woe is me now, for my soul is wearied because of murderers."

IN April, at the time of the burial of the remains found at Carr's Rock, Kate came with Robert Carisbrooke to "The Cedars," where were General Carson, the doctor, and Mrs. Carisbrooke.

The evening after the funeral Mrs. Carisbrooke and Kate went to Philadelphia to see Steenie, who was very ill. The mere mention of their arrival had such an effect upon the sensitive girl, who seemed in the crisis of some strange nervous malady, that the physicians insisted she should not see these visitors; they said it would bring a fresh sense of her loss—a return of the harrowing grief which was caused by the manner of her sister's death. In fact, to avoid all such meetings or memories they advised Steenie's

being taken abroad. Before Mrs. Carisbrooke and Kate left for Cincinnati everything was arranged for Steenie's departure as soon as her health should be re-established. Madame Detontville and "Mammy Sara" were to accompany her.

The gentlemen at "The Cedars" were engaged in daily consultations with the attorneys for "the Cartaret estate."

Unless Hartley relinquished the deed of transfer which Kate had unwittingly signed he would be the absolute owner of Rue's inheritance. This fact, unwelcome to Doctor Carisbrooke and his brother, was gall and wormwood to Carson. Without any apparent reason for his suspicion Carson constantly referred to Hartley as the "author of the accident at Carr's Rock."

The railroad officials were unable to explain the breaking of the rail. Careful examination proved that it was not defective—that the break was recent. It was evident from the angle of deflection and the jagged edges of the twisted splint that it was broken *either just before* or at the moment of the accident. Upon these apparently insignificant facts Carson built his belief, and, as we know, began an investigation,

which was suddenly interrupted by "THE HARTLEY MURDER."

The announcement of this new crime in the New York papers was the first intimation the trustees of "the Cartaret estate" had of Hartley's return from Europe.

The circumstances of the murder, as he understood those circumstances, and the time and place where the body was found, somewhat justified Carson's suspicion. This suspicion grew into an article of belief with both Carson and Robert Carisbrooke when the fact transpired that Hartley had arrived in New York, *via* Liverpool and Montreal, the week before that fatal accident.

But in no way could the proof of Hartley's crime assist the innocent victim the law had condemned. If all Carson's beliefs had been proved upon the trial, court and jury would have regarded them as additional evidence of Bob's guilt. It would but have strengthened the theory of the prosecution as to "revengeful motives."

In fruitless effort for Bob's pardon or a reprieve the days went on until the first Thursday in July—the day before the one appointed for the execution.

Kate was staying at Rosebank.

The doctor came up "the hill" at noon with letters from Carson, who wrote as if he were hopeless of any happy turn in Bob's affairs unless that obstinate, self-selected victim of justice could be persuaded to trust his friends with the secret which it was evident he was keeping.

This was the news which the doctor read to Mrs. Carisbrooke, Kate, and Molly on the shady piazza, but which Molly scarcely heard, so absorbed was she in the large, straggling sentences which covered the many sheets of her own private despatch.

When the doctor had finished his reading he asked: "Molly, does Carson say anything to you of his belief as to who was the murderer of Captain Hartley?"

"Yes, papa." With a glance at Kate she stopped.

Kate. "Your hesitation troubles me, Molly. I trust the truth, whatever it is, may be told me. Truth never hurts as deeply as concealment."

Molly. "I do not doubt your courage or endurance, Cousin Kate, but these surmises of my husband—they are only surmises—might give you needless pain."

Kate. "Any pain which would prove to me that poor Bob is guiltless I would welcome. I have not forgotten how devoted he was to Rue—to all the Leszinkskys. Please tell your news, Molly."

Molly turned the loose leaves rather nervously for so calm and self-poised a character, as she answered: "General Carson thinks that Oscar killed Captain Hartley."

Kate. "Oscar?"

Molly. "Yes, Oscar. Two days before the murder Bob was with my husband in New York. Bob left there to join Oscar, who was waiting for him near the station beyond Carr's Rock. They had never found the O'Dowds, although they had been constantly looking for their place in the search which they were making for Lucy before Rue—died."

The look in Molly's face showed how this allusion, this touch of a grievous wound, hurt, but she steadily continued:

"General Carson is sure Bob met Oscar after he left the inn; Bob must have told Oscar that Captain Hartley was there on his way to the O'Dowd's. My husband says: 'Oscar is a fatalist, and years ago he declared to me that if the

Lord ever delivered Captain Hartley into his hands he would kill him!'"

Kate. "What wrong had Captain Hartley done him?"

Molly. "I do not know, Cousin Kate, if you ever heard that Lucy was Oscar's wife."

Kate. "No, I never knew—" She stopped abruptly.

There was a short silence. In a glance of appeal Molly begged her father to tell the story; a negative gesture compelled her to continue:

"My husband says further: 'Oscar always believed a time of payment—a time when revenge should be a duty—would come, and the debt has steadily increased.' Oscar knew of Lucy's later wrong when she was separated from her child and sold as a slave."

The change in Kate's face, its deadly pallor, hushed Molly's reluctant words, until Kate asked:

"Go on, please, Molly. I must hear all. No one can shield me from this sorrow or help me bear it. Even here in this world 'our sins find us out.'"

As she was speaking Kate's hands were held out in entreaty. She knew she would be struck,

be punished, by the words which were coming; but they could not wound her more severely than did the thought of her share in the sin which was bearing such bitter fruit.

Kate's appeal forced a continuation of Molly's readings from Carson's letter and of Molly's explanation of the text: "Oscar's devotion to his master and to his master's child was absolute; so there were later and almost stronger reasons for his hate than his own wrongs or Lucy's." Molly turned the pages to make them tell the story. "My husband says further 'that although there is no tangible proof which the law would accept or admit as evidence,' he believes and Bob and Oscar believe that, either personally or by procurement, Captain Hartley caused the accident at Carr's Rock."

"For what reason?" cried Kate. The pleading hands were held above a bowed head. The meek expression of surrender and acceptance of the inevitable which was expressed in Kate's attitude touched Molly so deeply that speech failed her. Again the whispered question came: "For what reason—for what reason? O Dr. Carisbrooke! will *you* not tell me?"

Dr. Carisbrooke. "Remember it is not proved.

It only seems proved to those whose prejudices may blind their judgment."

Kate. "O Dr. Carisbrooke! what reason could there be? Why does General Carson think this?"

Dr. Carisbrooke. "Past crimes point to a new one when there is motive for crime. Rue dead, Captain Hartley would succeed to the inheritance he secured in your deed of transfer."

Kate was on her feet, staggering under this last blow like some one suddenly struck blind. They all gathered about her. Sure of being understood by the young mother, she threw her arms around Molly, gasping brokenly: "O my baby! my baby! He was your father!"

A servant came hastily to the steps of the piazza: "Doctor, a woman is lying dead under a tree in the orchard near the cottage."

At Mrs. Carisbrooke's quick cry, "It is Lucy! I know it is Lucy!" Kate glided from Molly's encircling arms and was gone. They quickly followed the lead of the slender feet which were running in the way of repentance and of mercy. When the Carisbrookes reached the cottage Kate was sitting under the tree that shaded the door-step, holding in her arms the shrunken, wasted form of the death-stricken woman.

She was not dead, but she was dying, this poor, storm-tossed Hagar.

The pallid face was resting upon Kate's breast. There was a half-frightened yet strange look of happiness in the beautiful brown eyes which were watching the tears that gathered and fell from the long, dark lashes of the starry eyes which shone with tender light upon her.

Dr. Carisbrooke took the little, withered hand and counted the pulse-beats. Then he gave low-spoken directions to his wife and Molly, and soon the cottage was open and ready for the tenant who was to make but short stay there before she started on her last lonely journey.

While the hurried preparation at the cottage was being made the doctor went to his office for needed restoratives.

During the brief space of his absence Kate was alone with Lucy. Only Lucy heard Kate's confession of wrong and her prayer for forgiveness. The words spoken were few and simple, but they were levers that lifted a heavy weight from two suffering souls. When all was ready Kate carried Lucy into the cottage; then, kissing the pale lips of the fainting "Hagar," she was gone. All that long, hot afternoon the doctor was busy

with the patient, whose strength was going in constant effort at speech. At last he caught the meaning of the broken sentences, and his questions were answered in intelligible but monosyllabic replies. Giving Lucy a stimulant to sustain her during the fast-going hours, which must now be hoarded to save the innocent, the doctor sent in haste for Horry, who lived near by, for a magistrate, and for Grandison.

Lucy was so near death that the questioning was brief; but it was evident to all the assistants that she had a perfectly clear and sane recollection of the events which had occurred since she left Rosebank in February; she had a rational memory of her delusions, while thoroughly recognizing them as the delusions of her insane moments. It was as if one were telling the feverish dreams which had filled the hours of a broken and troubled sleep.

This is the history of her wanderings, as developed in the questions and answers of that dying declaration:

When Lucy left Rosebank she had gone to the O'Dowds'. The change and the journey quieted her and brought her out of the mist of her distempered fancies. There was trouble and illness

at the O'Dowds', and in care for the sick Lucy forgot herself. Two of Mary O'Dowd's children were ill with the small-pox in Philadelphia at the house of a married sister. The youngest son had come to the cabin in the hills for his mother. He was taken with small-pox the night of his arrival. Before he recovered his mother caught the infection. The boy was soon well and had gone back to Philadelphia, and his mother, who was recovering rapidly, was to leave Lucy to care for the house while she visited her children. The night before Mary O'Dowd's departure Lucy heard some one moaning at the door. Worn out with the long nursing and frightened with the sudden awakening, a new delusion took possession of Lucy. She thought she heard Mai's voice calling in the distance, "Mother! mother!" When she opened the door a woman was lying on the steps.

What followed I will give in the words in which Dr. Carisbrooke told the story to his wife:

"Lucy is perfectly sane. It is the final quickening of the intelligence which nearly always precedes the death of a person who has been partially insane. I tell you this to prepare you for a startling revelation. The woman on the door-

steps—" His wife interrupted : "O Carisbrooke, it was Rue! Rue is living—Rue! I see the answer in your eyes."

"Virginia, I am half afraid of your sanity. Your reconstruction of dead ancestors and your gift of prophecy, your divination of mysteries, is likely to twist your remarkably fine understanding into a fatal snarl."

"But it was Rue, Carisbrooke?"

"Yes, it was Rue."

"Where is she now, Carisbrooke? Not at the O'Dowds', or they would have found her at the time Hartley was murdered. Carson would surely have found her. Where is she?"

"Just there, Virginia, is the puzzle. Here is something Lucy gave me. It is a visible proof of Rue's existence, for Lucy took it from Rue when she undressed her."

He put in his wife's hand a brooch of chased gold. It was one they both knew. Mrs. Carisbrooke touched a spring. Looking upon the painted miniature of Stanislaus Leszinksky, she said :

"Cannot Lucy tell where Rue is?"

"No. Lucy's delusion was that *Mai brought Rue to the cabin to save her from a threatening*

danger. Either something she had heard or else a clairvoyant sense of Hartley's purpose pointed out the one to be feared.

"Rue was in a state of half-consciousness. Lucy says she had a cut on the temple and another on the back of her head. There must have been some injury—probably concussion of the brain.

"Mary O'Dowd had gone to Philadelphia without knowing who was the stranger that Lucy had taken in. Rue had been three weeks at the cabin in a half-dazed, semi-conscious condition, when one night she became feverish and restless. I think it possible she was taking the small-pox. At daylight she grew more composed and quiet. Lucy had gone to an inner room; she had not been long asleep when she was aroused by the sound of the opening of the outer door. She got up instantly. She said she could not understand what prompted her, but that as she passed the table she caught up a pistol she had taken from Rue's pocket. When she pushed back the door leading to Rue's room she saw Hartley standing by the bed, looking at the sleeping girl. She says the look in his face made her kill him."

"Lucy killed him!"

"Yes, she shot him—killed him with the pistol Stanislaus Leszinksky gave Margaret before Rue was born. Rue always carried it. It was found on Bob when he was arrested; it was a strong point in the evidence."

"But Bob—where did he get it? O Carisbrooke! what a murderous look must have been in that man's face when so gentle a creature as Lucy—I cannot yet believe Lucy killed him!"

"She says when he fell—you know it was proved that he must have been killed instantly—she threw the pistol at him and fled. When she turned toward the wood she looked back and two men were running up the steps."

"Bob and Oscar?"

"Yes, Lucy was sure it was Oscar."

"But Rue—where is Rue?"

"Where Oscar and Bob must have taken her. Evidently Bob thought that Rue killed Hartley. This confession of Lucy's will save Bob. Horry and Grandison have gone to telegraph Carson, the governor, and Bob's counsel. The magistrate's notes will be sent on by mail. Bob will be saved. But I must start in the morning, Virginia; Rue may be ill. I am troubled about Rue."

"May I go with you, Carisbrooke?"

"I wish you could. But Molly? We cannot both leave Molly alone with all the care Lucy's death will bring. Besides, there is Kate."

"Kate will insist upon going with you. Nothing could keep her from Rue. I must go at once and tell Kate."

Mrs. Carisbrooke failed to find Kate; but coming from her room, she met Molly and her father. Molly's tearful face said that Lucy was dead before the words were spoken. Mrs. Carisbrooke asked:

"At the very last did she speak of Mai?"

"No, mamma. When papa let me go to her she knew me, but she did not speak. I took her hand and she held me close—close! She was so still I thought she was sleeping. Suddenly she threw up her hands and called, 'Oscar!'—only once, and it was over. It was her last breath, her last cry." Doctor Carisbrooke said softly: "It was the cry of conscience. The ties of the flesh are not so strong as the law of the spirit. Affection may die, but conscience is immortal."

After leaving the cottage Kate went to her room. But a longing she could not resist mas-

tered her. She left the house, and once again she walked through the shady lane into the wood-path under the trees where she had first walked with Leszinksky. She heard these words echo out of the past:

"The lane is cool and shady; will you come?"

There was a ghostly rhythm of steps in the leafy path, and the distant sound of a shot hard-followed by the cry of a wounded bird.

"See how it bleeds! poor little thing. Will it die?"

"It is dying now."

Question and answer came out of the far-away years! There were other words:

"But now you are sorry. To-day, when you found what injustice Lucy had suffered, you forgave her for pity's sake."

Kate leaned on the gnarled roots of the tree where the robin was buried, repeating unconsciously the words, "for pity's sake."

The westering sun sent waves of light beneath the branches. Her own shadow fell across the path where Leszinksky had stood. The shadow seemed the ghost of the past. To that past she cried:

"For pity's sake Lucy has forgiven me. It

was I who was in the wrong. She was the victim of caste, of sex, of the world's unjust division of responsibility. Through love she was obedient to evil. Man did not pity her; *he* dragged her into a sin which has limitless consequences! But God pitied her. He gave her a child and touched her with the divine spirit of motherhood, which has cleansed her of sin; while I—O my Father! thou hast dealt justly with me. Thou hast taken into thy care the child which was lying on my heart when I was hard and cruel to a suffering mother. I would not forgive her when pride, not love, was wounded; but 'for pity's sake' she has forgiven me."

In the cool, dewy twilight a sad woman walked alone under overarching trees. The silence was unbroken. The regular rhythm of steps that fell together was lost for ever from the leafy lane.

CHAPTER XLVI.

"Ah, God! that ghastly gibbet:
How dismal 'tis to see
The great, tall, spectral skeleton,
The ladder, and the tree!

"He would not deign them word nor sign,
But alone he bent the knee
And veiled his face, for Christ's dear grace,
Beneath the gallows-tree.

"There was another heavy sound,
A hush, and then a groan;
And darkness swept across the sky—
The work of death was done!"

SENTENCED by a hanging judge! Bob's friends made vain appeal to a hanging governor. The answer was ready:

"The majesty of the law must be respected." An offering of blood must be poured upon the altar of justice. The sculptor "builded better than he knew" when he bandaged the eyes of the statue he brought out of stone.

Night and day, during that month between the day of sentence and the day appointed for its execution, Carson and the counsel for the defence

wearied the authorities with their continual coming. Three of the jurymen signed the petition for the commutation of sentence. The prosecuting attorney promised to sign it if they could get the signature of the judge. The judge was deaf to the plea for mercy!

The governor's reason for refusal, as given to Carson, was the stale but plausible answer which has fed the gallows for centuries: "He could not conscientiously interfere with the course of justice." The unspoken reason was, public sentiment called for the execution of the criminal, and his excellency could not go against public sentiment, for the fall elections were near at hand.

As Pilate listened to the cry, "Release unto us Barabbas," so the governor pardoned the corrupt leader of a corrupt "ring" which had plundered the public treasury for years, while he washed his hands of the blood of the soldier who had followed his country's flag through the fiery storm of a hundred battles.

Night and day during this waiting time Pike was Bob's support and stay. The "crippled preacher to the Indians" had won the hearts of the little community of the county town. He

had found a home near the jail, and the keeper of the jail, who was a humane and kindly man, gave him free access to his old comrade.

When the jail doors opened in the morning Pike was always there waiting admittance. The turnkey and the prisoners in the cells could hear the simple, cordial salutation, always the same, always direct from the heart.

"How-dy, Bob? Our Father's brung us safe to the light of another mornin', my frien'. He'll bring us safe up yonder to the Great Light at las'. Let's beg his marcy in the words he's l'arnt us."

Then the jailer at the door and the listening prisoners could hear that sublimely simple prayer Jesus of Nazareth taught his disciples.

From the first day of Pike's coming until the last, when the voice of a strong man in agony for his friend who was about to die reached them, not a sound of mockery, not a ribald word ever disturbed the Christian who was about the work his Master had set him to do. The missionary of the woods unconsciously carried the message of his Father and theirs to the criminals in the jail.

During the hours when Bob left his cell for a

walk in the jail-yard Pike was with him. The crutches wore little paths across the stones.

During these walks Bob resumed his old habit of monologue. He would talk of everything in the past except of what had occurred in those two days between the time of his leaving New York and the time of his arrest. No question or entreaty of Pike or of General Carson brought any answer except the self-criminating one:

"How or whar that man died don't make no differ'nce. Whosomedever put him outen this world did the folks lef' in it a sarvice. He desarved more'n he got. If I could b'lieve in hell I'd tell you for sho' he's a citizen of that climate. Anyhow, he's dead and I ain't sorry."

Oscar's absence when Carson expected him to come with news of Lucy sometimes made Carson think that Oscar had committed the murder, and that Bob was waiting for Oscar to have a safe start in the race with Justice. A discreet question, and a hint that he "thought Oscar had been gone long enough to get to the Seminole settlement in Mexico, where he was sure to find friends and shelter," brought an unexpected answer:

"I can't tell you, general, that I didn't kill Captain Hartley, and I won't, but I'm free to say

Oscar had no hand in it. He didn't even see it done. If Oscar ever gets in trouble 'bout this I'll thank you kindly, sir, if you'll say my las' words cl'ared him. I know you'll see him outen it, fur you're a-tryin' your best to help me, and I can't and won't say I didn't do it."

Then the advocate, sure of his theory of Bob's sacrifice of himself, came. It was after they had failed to persuade the governor to commute the sentence. At his request he saw Bob alone. He came straight to the point:

"You did not kill Captain Hartley. I am sure you did not kill him, but you are willing to die in the place of the person who did."

Unhappily, the last sentence confirmed Bob in his belief that his death would insure Rue's safety by putting her out of the law's reach. Convinced of that, he did not listen understandingly to the words which followed.

The advocate waited for an answer, but Bob took refuge in silence. It was his only possible defence against the trained intelligence which he feared would force him into betrayal of the truth.

"If you would trust me I could save you. The governor asked me if I would pledge my honor that from what you have told me as your

counsel I was sure of your innocence. I could not, for you have told me nothing. I beg of you to tell me now. Your secret will be safe with me, but then I can give the governor my word and he will grant a reprieve. Time is what we want, for time unravels all mysteries."

Again the last sentence was fatal. Bob's most intense wish now was that the end should come. He counted the few days left and was sorry there was almost a week to wait. There was no consolation to him but a terrible threat in the words, "Time unravels all mysteries." Why did they not leave him in peace? was his thought; why were General Carson and Pike helping to snare him into a confession that would put the child of the friends they had all loved so dearly in his place?

The advocate left the condemned man to his obstinate silence. But the experienced lawyer was but the more firmly convinced that Bob was not the murderer.

The evening before the day appointed for the execution Bob and Pike were left alone together. The conversation of the two friends was unrestrained, and Pike made a last appeal for his friend's confidence.

"Thar ain't no use, Pike, of askin' me. I can't tell and I won't. You know thar's a mighty strong reason fur what I'm a-doin'. I ain't noways 'feard o' dyin'. I ain't never shirked no place whar I was a-riskin' it. But I'm free to say hangin' goes agin' the grain. If 'twas a rifle-ball comin' straight through my heart in the mornin' I'd take it and say, Thankee. I could look down the bar'l and see the way a soldier mought die. You know I wouldn't flinch. And I ain't a-goin' to flinch anyway; but it's a dog's death, Pike—yes, it's a dog's death! Stranglin' a man and a-hangin' him up for a sign of what human natur' can do fur a brother!—a-showin' God-a-Mighty that a jury-box and a judge's bench is high 'nough fur men to stand on and reach up and take His pass-keys fur to send his critters into Kingdom-come 'thout any leave o' his'n."

"But can't you furgiv' 'em, Bob? Jesus Christ furgiv' 'em when he was a-hangin' on the tree fur no sin, but o'ny to save sinners."

"Well, ain't I a-savin'—" Bob had commenced with an impetuous outburst, then he suddenly stopped. Pike caught his friend and hugged him close to his heart.

"Bob," he said softly—"Bob, my frien', you didn't kill that man, Bob. I sees the truth at las'! I has been sore afeard fur you, Bob. I has wrastled with God's angel fur this, like Jacob of old. Night and day, Bob, night and day I has begged the blessin' from our Father, and now I got it. You didn't kill him, Bob!—no, my frien', you *didn't* kill him! Bob, Bob! our Father in heaven 'is a very present help in time o' trouble.'"

Pike dropped his head on Bob's shoulder and wept like a child.

The jailer came to tell Pike it was time for him to go. As he entered he heard the voice of prayer. Softly closing the door, he went away. He could not find it in his heart to banish the friend and minister of the man who was so soon to die.

All night Pike was left with his friend. Part of the time Bob slept. Pike unwearily kept his vigil of prayer for his friend's salvation. The bitterness of his own grief had been lost in the knowledge of Bob's innocence of the crime for which he was to suffer. There was something of the triumphant and thanksgiving strain of the Psalmist in the simple words with which Pike

confessed his joy at this final goodness of his Heavenly Father. He could now see his friend die, feeling assured that the Judge Eternal would consider his guiltless suffering and receive his soul in loving kindness and mercy.

At daylight Bob awakened to see Pike quietly sitting beside him, looking at him with an expression of solemn joy in his clear, childlike eyes of heavenly blue.

"Pike," said Bob, taking his friend's hand, "thar's somethin' I want you to do—o'ny you must promise me you won't tell it to nobody, not the general or nobody. You'll jus' do it, first, bekase I asks it of you; and then—well, you'll know arfter you promise."

"Yes, Bob; you can trus' me, Bob. I'll do what you wants, my frien', jus' as you tells me to do, Bob."

"Pike, you know that depot thar by the railroad at —— thar?"

"Yes, Bob; the general and me come by thar when he brought me here."

"Did you look at the hills 'bout thar, Pike?"

"No, Bob, I can't say I did."

"Well, anyway, you'll find the place. You ain't cl'ar furgot our trail-marks?"

"No, Bob. Tell me what natur' looks like in rocks, and hills, and trees, and I'll find any place you wants me to go."

"Well, go over to the railroad thar by yourself, Pike. Don't tell anybody; don't take nobody."

"No, Bob; I won't."

"Stan' over on the side of the depot away from the river, with your back agin the door thar, and over a little to your right above the ridge you'll see a high hill which looks like that bald knob with the Osage beacon on it over on the Kiameshia."

"Yes, Bob. I 'member that knob; I'll know one like it."

"Git your barrin's fixed and then go 'round the ridge to the left. You'll have a long walk, Pike, but I know you'll try it. It's hard to ask o' you, Pike, to go thar on crutches, but I must; thar ain't nobody but you I dar' trus'."

"I'll do it, Bob. Don't be oneasy, my frien'. I'll go an' I'll find it."

"Arfter you go 'round that road and cross the ridge you mustn't go down offen the ridge, but turn up a sort o' cow-path to the right along the ridge till you see the p'int o' the knob. By that

time you'll see a big rock up thar, and three little hemlocks agin it."

"Yes, Bob; up the ridge to the right till I see the rock and the three hemlocks on the knob."

"Then, Pike, you must stop."

"Stop, Bob?"

"Yes; stop and take off your hat, and wave it 'roun' your head so." Bob raised up and made the salute.

"Yes, Bob; it's a sign, may be?"

"It's a sign. Walk on till you come to a big flat rock in a straight line with the knob—thar's laurel bushes all 'roun' it—then wave your hat agin'."

"Yes, Bob."

"Then most-like somebody will wave from the rock on the knob; if they do you wait till they come down whar you are."

"And if they don't, Bob?"

"Then you mus' wait thar, 'cause you can't climb that hill; and every hour while daylight lasts wave agin. If by that time you ain't seen nobody you must go agin four weeks from to-day. It's kind o' quar, but it war fixed in the start fur a Friday."

"Mus' I go to-day, Bob?"

"Yes, to-day. I know you won't leave me till—till it's done; but then, Pike, arfter I'm gone you ain't got no time to waste bein' sorry."

"No, Bob; I'll leavé that up thar with our Father and go. You can trus' me."

"Then, Pike, you mus' tell what's become o' me."

"To the man I find thar?"

"Yes, to him; and tell him I said he can tell you who's up in the hills."

"Will he know me, Bob, and believe you sent me when I ask, 'Who's up in the hills'?"

"Yes, he'll know. Then, if all's safe in the hills, you get General Carson and go with the man."

"Mus' I ask General Carson to wait here, Bob, till I sees the man?"

"Yes; when I'm—when I'm gone you may tell him to wait. Ar' you sho' you'll know, Pike, jus' whar to go?" Pike repeated the directions. After that he prayed; then the jailer came.

At the moment Bob was giving Pike these directions Oscar was waiting on the hill. He had been there twice before—on days appointed by Bob if anything should keep him from coming to

the place of refuge to which Oscar had taken Rue.

From the dawning of day Oscar had vigilantly watched valley and ridge. About seven o'clock he saw a light buggy rapidly driven to the station. There was an instant stir and movement about the station. A man ran across a field and returned hurriedly with another. Then a gentleman got out of the buggy and they all went into the station.

"That looked mighty like Marse Carson."

Oscar wiped the glasses and watched closely. He had seen the people about the station so often he knew who belonged there. The train was coming from New York and General Carson came out of the door. Oscar could now see distinctly that it was General Carson. No one got off the train. Oscar saw that, for Oscar was hoping General Carson was waiting for Bob. The train moved on and Carson walked up and down before the door. Oscar knew him so well he could tell how impatient and nervous the walker was. He would look at the sun and his watch, stopping occasionally at the door as if to question some one.

"I wonder," thought Oscar, "if he's a-waitin'

fur Marse Bob? I'm mighty troubled 'bout Marse Bob. He told me not to go 'way from here, not to go lookin' fur him, if he didn't come; but it's quar Marse Carson's thar waitin', too. I mus' see Marse Carson."

As if to make his decision irrevocable Oscar walked rapidly down the hill. Then he ran down the slope of the ridge and around to the station. He touched Carson before Carson knew him.

"Why, Oscar!"

Amazement and fear of some new trouble held Carson as he looked at the thin, gaunt, raggedly-clad figure and the careworn, anxious face of the negro.

"Mornin', Marse Carson; how-dy, sir? I's been mighty troubled and oneasy 'bout Marse Bob, sir. I was up thar on the hill thar"—pointing—"whar he told me to wait to-day fur him. I've been thar twice befo', like he said, but he didn't come; and this mornin', when I seed you here, sir, I had to come to ask you, sir, if you know whar he is."

Carson was puzzled. News had come that morning which made him hopeful of Bob's immediate reprieve; but to hear who had killed

Hartley would be a startling blow to Oscar. Dr. Carisbrooke had telegraphed. That morning he had received a despatch sent the night before. Carson knew the lawyer who had defended Bob had been telegraphed and was now in communication with the governor, who had also been telegraphed from Cincinnati that the person who committed the murder was there, and had in confessing the crime completely exonerated Bob.

Oscar's sudden appearance and his ignorance of Bob's danger upset the theory Carson had built upon the telegrams he had received. In the fewest words he told Oscar of Bob's trial, conviction, and danger of execution if a reprieve was not telegraphed in time to take it to the county town before noon.

The sentence must be executed at twelve o'clock. That was the last minute the sheriff could wait; he had promised to wait until then. At first Oscar could not understand—could not realize Bob's danger. Carson plainly restated the brutal truth. Oscar fell at his feet and caught Carson's knees, crying between choking sobs:

"He didn't do it, Marse Carson. He didn't do it! I know he didn't. O Lord o' vengeance!

you know he didn't do it. *I* wanted to do it, but Marse Bob wouldn't let me. I can't tell you all, Marse Carson; I can't tell you, but 'fore God he didn't do it, sir—'fore God he didn't!"

"Yes, I know he did not." Then Carson stopped; he could not give the suffering, loving nature another and probably a harder blow. Oscar was so crushed by grief that he asked no questions. He had got one thought fixed in heart and brain. He knew if a reprieve did not come in time Bob must die. The negro crouched upon the ground, his hands clenched behind his head; he was looking up with staring, bloodshot eyes at the sun and the wires of the telegraph line, as if they must speak. But the sun rolled on his way and there was no message.

Ten o'clock! Eleven o'clock! The lazy cattle were lying under the shade in the meadow. A solitary bird was singing in the wood close by. There was a busy insect hum under every blade of grass where Oscar was lying. The bird's carol and the steady humming seemed to beat in his brain.

The index pointed at the half hour. Click! click! a little metallic cry inside the window, and Carson uttered a hurried exclamation.

Oscar was on his feet, but he tremblingly staggered to the door.

"Is it come, Marse Carson? is it come?"

"The reprieve? Yes, Oscar, yes!"

Oh! what a joyful cry to Oscar was that "yes."

"Come, Oscar; you shall drive me back. We have the fastest horse in the county. You shall save Bob, Oscar. Come!"

The negro no longer trembled; the relaxed nerves and muscles were restrung. Only the pulses were throbbing with the new strength that appeal had called into life.

They had started.

"How fur is it, Marse Carson?"

The distance was told. The negro knew it was a bare possibility to win in the race, but his strength, experience, and training all aided.

Nowhere could Carson have found a better driver. Carefully, steadily, without fretting or worrying him, the horse was kept at his best. Not the smallest obstruction missed the driver's eye; never did the firm hand fail. There were no words except an occasional telling from Carson of time and the distance yet to make. The

white spire of the village church gleamed in the sunshine.

There was a rough little bridge over a gully. Oscar's hand was like iron in its steady hold; but the horse stumbled, and then, recovering, went on. Slower—still slower. Whip and voice urged him into broken spurts.

Carson looked at Oscar. The negro's face was ashen with its wild look of fright.

"What is it, Oscar?"

"He can't do it, Marse Carson, but I mus'. You know how I used to run. I'll do it now, sir. Drive him a minute at his best, sir, while I gits ready."

The jacket, shoes, and heavy flannel shirt were thrown away. With his knife he cut his breeches short to the knees. His suspenders were slipped from his shoulders and strapped about his waist.

"Now I'm ready, Marse Carson. Giv' me the paper, sir, then stop him a minute. Whar mus' I go with it?"

"Straight to the jail, over to the right of the church-spire you see. Keep straight ahead till you pass the church, then the first turn to the right. You will see a crowd, I think. They will

all tell you where to go. Cry out, 'A pardon!' Yes, say it is a pardon. Run, Oscar, run; it's Bob's last chance!"

Carson reined up a moment and Oscar was in the road. Then he stood up and shouted a cheer to the runner. Before he again whipped the lame horse into a broken gallop Oscar had turned a curve and was out of sight.

With his head erect and his arms close up the negro sprang forward in his race with death. As he reached the outskirts of the village the court-house clock sounded its slow pulsation of time. Each stroke was a lash to the runner. People saw him coming and shouted. They knew no man could run like that unless it was to save life. They moved out of the way to let him pass, and then followed fast in his steps. The crowd at the jail saw him and a cry went up:

"Cut him down! A reprieve! Cut him down!"

Oscar was deaf to all sound, except the tumult which was beating in his brain and the whirling of mighty winds which seemed to ring in his ears. He knew he had been told to cry aloud. But with the first effort at speech there was only

a hoarse moan, and then a shriller cry—such a cry as the mountain pine sends to its fellows when the storm is pulling its roots from their place of vantage. At last his voice came and framed words:

"A pardon! a pardon! You's free, Marse Bob! you's free!"

Right and left they parted to let him through. He saw the scaffold and men crowding about it.

Only a piece of rope was hanging from the ghastly gibbet.

"A pardon! You's free, Marse Bob! Oscar's here, Marse Bob! You's free—free! *O Lord o' vengeance!* WHAT!"

He stumbled blindly forward; the blood gushed in a bright red torrent from his mouth. As some one took the paper from the outstretched hand he fell at the foot of the gallows —across the lifeless body of the man they had cut down as the people shouted, "A reprieve!"

Two of the faithfullest hearts that have beat in the century were still. The awe-struck crowd parted to let the crippled preacher reach the dead. Pike knelt beside the man law had murdered and the man God had in very truth "set free." The scarred face of the cripple was lifted

heavenward, but the pale, quivering lips were dumb. The heart of the child-like Christian was crushed by the crime of the nineteenth century. The burning sun seemed an angry flame which threatened the earth. The shadow of the gibbet hid from him the face of the Father.

A caged bird in the jail-window began singing in low, broken runs, and then thrilled the hot, slumbrous air with a burst of melody. The crowd stirred uneasily; the dumb lips were unclosed: "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do."

RARE BOOK
COLLECTION

THE LIBRARY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF
NORTH CAROLINA
AT
CHAPEL HILL

Wilmer
220